



# Coronavirus — information for parish & town councils

NALC has updated its dedicated webpage on the coronavirus. This includes information on audit dates, Zoom discount for remote meetings and the small business grant funding scheme. See the updates below:

## Audit dates

Following NALC's engagement with government around local council audit timeframes final regulations are due to be made the week commencing 6 April which will extend the statutory audit deadlines for 2019/20. It is proposed that:

- The publication date for final, audited, accounts for local councils will move from 30 September to 30 November 2020
- To give local councils more flexibility, the requirement for the public inspection period to include the first 10 working days of July has been removed. Instead, local councils must commence the public inspection period on or before the first working day of September 2020

This means that draft accounts must be approved by 31 August 2020 at the latest or maybe approved earlier where possible.

Authorities must publish the dates of their public inspection period this year, and the government recommends that they provide public notice on their websites (where available) when the public inspection period would usually commence, explaining why they are departing from normal practise for 2020. We will provide updates for our members once these regulations have been made. The Joint Practitioners Action Group (JPAG) will also provide an addendum to the Practitioners Guide to layout fully for councils the new time frames that the government puts in place.

We are pleased the government has listened to the sector and recognises the need for an extension to the timeframes for audit. This extension is for two months and not the minimum of at least three months which NALC called for in [our response to the consultation](#) on the draft regulations.

### **Holding remote meetings**

NALC has been working with the Crown Commercial Service to allow local councils to access a discounted rate for using [Zoom](#) – an online meeting platform. More information on this discount and how to access it will be available in the coming days.

### **Small business grant funding scheme**

In response to COVID-19, the government announced there would be support for small businesses, and businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. You can [check government guidance](#) to see if any businesses run by your local council would be eligible for this support. This support will take the form of two grant funding schemes, the Small Business Grant Fund and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund. The schemes will be delivered by principal authorities – if you are eligible, your principal authorities will be in touch with you to arrange payment.

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This information forms part of a NALC's dedicated webpage on the coronavirus. It should not be used as a substitute for government advice, however, there are some practicalities specific to local (parish and town) councils where we hope this information will help you plan ahead and manage your risks. If you would like further advice and support on any of these topics for your local council then please [contact your local county association](#). This is a fast-moving situation and we will be updating the webpage regularly.

[Find out more](#)



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