

Correspondence List for meeting dated 8 April 2020

Ref	Date received	From	Subject	Note/comment
<i>Note: CDALC = County Durham Association of Local Councils NALC = National Association of Local Councils SLCC = Society of Local Council Clerks</i>				
1	04/03/2020	CDALC	Details of DCC consultation on the proposed Co. Durham and Darlington Road Safety Strategy, which is open to 29 March. The focus is on a reduction in the number of injuries and reducing their severity, with delivery through influencing behavioural change via good communication/education and enforcement campaigns, better use of data analysis and partnership working between agencies.	
2	05/03/2020	Calor	Launch of Rural Community Fund - grants of £5k available for funding projects in off-grid (gas) areas. Previously have funded search and rescue equipment, living space for elderly people with dementia and a whole host of other things.	
3	05/03/2020	CDALC	NALC Chief Executive's bulletin: thanking local councils for work during recent floods; announcement of Tree Charter Day 2020 (28 November) offering free trees from the Woodland Trust; changes have been agreed for the 2020/21 Annual Governance and Accountability Return; and Lobby Day on 10 March will have CDALC reps meeting (at least) Grahame Morris MP and Richard Holden MP.	
4	05/03/2020	CDALC	Request to share information about management of clerks, timesheets etc — for Hetton Town Council.	
5	09/03/2020	DCC Planning	Weekly list of new applications w/e 8 March. No new applications to consider.	
6	10/03/2020	Calor	Reminder of £85k pot of 11x£5k, 6x£2.5k and 5x£1k for communities off the mains gas grid to apply for projects that will improve local life. Applications deadline 9 April.	Emphasised at meeting 11/3/20.
7	10/03/2020	Keep Britain Tidy	Latest campaign to tackle dog fouling - posters with dogs as the messenger appealing directly to dog lovers and leveraging both pride and shame. Video, social media and posters available. Campaign pack £945 for non-members, £496 for members !!	
8	10/03/2020	LUDUS	Sales promotion for playground equipment. Filed.	
9	13/03/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus: 1) please keep up to date and help promote a consistent public health message through any website, social media and noticeboards; 2) national guidance awaited on implications for statutory requirements such as Annual Parish Meetings, PC decision making and Annual Governance and Accountability Return deadlines; and 3) PC should consider what, if anything, it can do to support more vulnerable people within the community.	
10	13/03/2020	CDALC	Highlighting three DCC consultations currently running: Advocacy service for young people; road safety strategy; and licensing of privately rented residential accommodation (latter not relevant to Teesdale) and also a DCC action plan as follow-on to climate emergency consultation of 2019. Links to all can be provided.	
11	16/03/2020	CDALC	Link to DCC consultation on Road Safety Strategy - consultation ends 29 March. Particularly want to hear from younger drivers (17-24), older drivers (55+), children, cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians.	
12	16/03/2020	CDALC	Link to the full feedback on DCC Climate Emergency consultation and the final Action Plan which resulted from it.	
13	16/03/2020	CDALC	Link to DCC Standards Committee reports relating to Code of Conduct issues received and handled by the Monitoring Officer. This can be forwarded to any councillor interested in taking a look.	
14	16/03/2020	CDALC	Link to DCC consultation on Road Safety Strategy - consultation ends 29 March. Particularly want to hear from younger drivers (17-24), older drivers (55+), children, cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians.	
15	16/03/2020	CDALC	Link to consultation on DCC's independent advocacy service for young people, as part of recommissioning the service.	
16	16/03/2020	CDALC	News that the Civic Pride Team of DCC has launched an Instagram account @civicpridedurham	

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17	16/03/2020	DCC Planning	Weekly list of new applications w/e 15 March. Email sent to all councillors 16/3/20.	
18	16/03/2020	CDALC	Roadworks report w/c 14/3. Nothing new to report.	
19	16/03/2020	Teesdale Action Partnership	Notice of cancellation of next TAP board meeting, 18 March.	
20	16/03/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus further update. Used as basis for email to all councillors on the evening of 16/3/20.	
21	17/03/2020	Keep Britain Tidy	Notice that Great British Spring Clean has been postponed, and Great British September Clean scheduled for 11-27 September.	
22	17/03/2020	CDALC	Link to new NALC website page: Coronavirus - information for parish and town councils. Clerk will check for updates daily.	
23	17/03/2020	CDALC	Notice that Mazars' Annual Governance and Accountability Return training session, 7 April, has been cancelled.	
24	17/03/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus: information from Local Government Secretary on support for local councils – 1) Councils can use their discretion on deadlines for Freedom of Information requests 2) the deadline for local government financial audits will be extended to 30 September 3) government will consider bringing forward legislation to remove the requirements for Annual Council meetings to take place in person and 4) government will consider bringing forward legislation to allow Council committee meetings to be held virtually for a temporary period.	
25	17/30/20	CDALC	Coronavirus: Durham County Council's Frequently Asked Questions (mainly relating to employment of council workforce)	
26	17/03/2020	Durham Community Action	Information that DCA is working with County Council, Public Health and voluntary sector. Support staff working from home. Website will be updated regularly.	
27	18/03/2020	Durham County Council	Terry Collins, CEO: update on the County Council's position regarding DCC premises, events and services.	
28	19/03/2020	Teesdale Action Partnership	Request for information about any groups that are/have the capacity to deliver any crisis services - in order to be included in a DCC response to the Covid-19 situation.	
29	19/03/2020	CDALC	Link to NALC's Coronavirus webpage which is updated daily. NALC are working on issues such as meetings (in person), Annual Parish Meetings, deadline for audits etc. Also encouraging PCs to emphasise the County Council's communications campaign through use of supplied Public Health materials.	
30	19/03/2020	Durham County Council	Terry Collins, CEO: briefing note 'What is the virus and the current picture' and suggesting that the best way to stay up to date is via the Government's website (link provided, which can be forwarded).	
31	19/03/2020	Durham Community Action	Call for participation in Covid-19 Sustainability Survey, link to Covid-19 guide for volunteer involving groups, information about contacting voluntary's groups funders; and link to online support via Knowledge Hub for voluntary sector groups.	
32	20/03/2020	Came & Company	'It's business as usual' email from the PCs insurer.	
33	20/03/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus email 6: update from NALC teleconference that expectation is that government will shortly announce that virtual meetings will be possible; DCC has cancelled all meetings during March, what happens beyond this is not known and being continuously reviewed; calling for examples to share of community action by parish councils; link to advice about burials for those PCs managing cemeteries; and a print-friendly version of the 'Isolate your household Stay at Home' poster (which Clerk has already laminated and put in the noticeboard).	
34	20/03/2020	Durham Community Action	Covid-19 Sustainability Survey for voluntary and community sector organisations in order to establish the bigger picture across the region and assess the needs for the future. Deadline for survey is 25 March.	

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35	20/03/2020	HMRC Business Help and Support	Links to Covid-19 support for businesses and guidance for employers	
36	23/03/2020	DCC Planning	Weekly list of new applications w/e 22 March. No new applications to consider.	
37	25/03/2020	Came & Company	Reassurance of business continuity, request to use email only for all correspondence and to make payments online not with cheques.	
38	26/03/2020	Mazars	Notice that issue of Annual Governance and Accountability Return and supporting guidance has been postponed for up to three weeks, whilst clarity is awaited from government on possible changes to deadlines and approval processes.	
39	26/03/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus email 7: Meetings — no council meetings should take place in person (though no legal alternative exists just yet, although Coronavirus Action 2020 would allow the Secretary of State to issue a Statutory Instrument allowing this) (Zoom could be explored for virtual meetings with public access, as a fallback use emails for decision making in order that voting can be evidenced), Annual Parish Meetings should be cancelled, Annual Meetings of the Council should be cancelled and Chairman stay in post until they resign or a meeting can be held; Play areas should be closed (recommended to take a photo of closure notice in place for insurance purposes; Allotments - conflicting views on whether should be closed or not; Cemetery — work in a cemetery is classed as key work; Operations — ambiguity from government so judgement call needed with reasoning recorded - can the person do their work keeping 2m distant from anyone else? Are additional PPE measures needed? Is the employee in another way 'at risk'? Job Retention Scheme would apply to any PAYE worker put on 'furlough' with 80% government wages; Finance — audit deadline extended to 30 September, any expenditure not delegated should be agreed by email and voting evidenced, encouragement to move to online banking to avoid cheque signing difficulties.	
40	26/03/2020	Durham Community Action	News update: ACRE is discussing with government the need for financial support for village halls; NCVO Know How member resources now available free to all; Action Fraud warning of 400% increase in Coronavirus-related fraud; links to DCC website and Public Health/ Government websites for latest updates; links to download documents: Advice for Volunteers and Good Practice Guide for Volunteer Involving Organisations.	
41	26/03/2020	CDALC	Burial survey to assist Covid-19 - survey to help planning for cremations and burials.. Clerk completed the survey.	
41	27/03/2020	Countryside Alliance	Introducing launch of Countryside Alliance COVID-19 Hub providing support for those in the rural community and a good news blog. Link can be provided.	
42	27/03/2020	HRMC	Business Help and Support - Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme update. New details published on gov.uk . Scheme will be up and running by end April. Advice will follow when the scheme is open.	
43	27/03/2020	SLCC	Details of new webinar opportunities — Appraisal techniques, Climate Emergency, Covid-19 Helping in the Community (8 April and 15 April), Agendas and Minutes, Emotional Resilience, Website Accessibility Guidelines, Microsoft 265 overview, Optimising home working for the modern clerk using Microsoft Teams, and Creating Accessible Word and PDF documents.	
44	27/03/2020	DCC	Notice that Park and Ride services in Durham City are to close temporarily in response to Stay at Home plea.	
45	27/03/2020	Teesdale Action Partnership	Latest edition of TAP ebulletin: Coronavirus advice; help with transport; UTASS rural advice hub, Staindrop Community Gym, Growing Healthy 0-19 Durham Dales, funding opportunities (Area Budget, Welfare Reform, Youth Fund, Older People's Social Isolation Fund and Holiday Activities with Healthy Food), advice about scams, and emergency contact information.	
46	27/03/2020	DCC	News of a helpline, webpage and support network - County Durham Together - which has been set up to help people in County Durham who are struggling during the Coronavirus pandemic. Also appeal for volunteers to help and links to local voluntary groups, businesses and other agencies who can offer help - online form at www.durham.gov.uk/covid19volunteer or call 03000 260260.	
47	27/03/2020	CDALC	Request to keep open any public toilets so that DCC direct service staff/refuse staff can access toilets and hand washing facilities.	

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48	27/03/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus email 8: CDALC staff now working from home; DCC Locate website includes a directory of assistance available during Covid-19 (and see item 44); new publicity materials from Public Health England; summary of government support for employers, provided by NALC's partners The Parkinson Partnership; and reiteration that Mazars have delayed the issue of Annual Governance and Accountability Return forms for up to three weeks in anticipation of changing legislation.	
49	30/03/2020	DCC Planning	Weekly list of new applications w/e 29 March. No new applications to consider.	
50	30/03/2020	CDALC	Two leaflets produced by the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments body sharing common errors in completion of the AGAR 2018-19 and in handling the Public Rights Period. Clerk will refer in dealing with the 2019-20 processes. Also a note that CDALC, despite the auditors' view, still advises that councils do not assist churches with funding for maintenance etc (as such spending could be declared ultra vires).	
51	30/03/2020	CDALC	Invitation to give opinions to a Rural Bus Inquiry being undertaken by the County All Party Parliamentary Group and the County Councils Network (terms of reference for which are available).	
52	30/03/2020	CDALC	Reminder to adhere to National Minimum Wage increases from April.	
53	30/03/2020	CDALC	Link to information about a Local Government Association one-day training workshop to enable elected members to champion health improvement and prevention in their communities (free of charge) .	
54	30/03/2020	CDALC	NALC policy consultation e-briefing into the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee Inquiry into Devolution. Deadline for response through CDALC is 17 April.	
55	30/03/2020	DCC Press Office	Press Release about DCC having already helped 1,134 properties with grants of £10-£25k to businesses through the Business Rates grant scheme. In total DCC expect to pay out £89m to over 8,000 properties.	
56	30/03/2020	CDALC	Call to share information about what council's grounds maintenance/cemetery staff are doing during coronavirus pandemic as no consistency on how government advice is being applied.	
57	30/03/2020	CDALC	One-page advice from ICCM on the cremation and burial of those dying with coronavirus. Clerk forwarded to Brownless Funeral Director for information (ref. Burial 31 March).	
58	31/03/2020	CDALC	Reminder of Mazars information about delay in issuing AGAR forms and guidance for up to 3 weeks and the fact that how to deal with ratifying the returns has yet to be determined but NALC is working with the government to get legislation changed on this.	
59	31/03/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus email 9: delay of AGAR forms issue; reminder that Regulations have not yet been determined by central government on permission to hold electronic/virtual meetings; acknowledgement of difficulty in exclusion of councillor(s) from participating due to technology or disinclination; news that 6-month rule for approving absence of a councillor is being reviewed; reference to National Allotment Society for guidance on use of allotments; and link to a survey from the campaign to end the toilet tax (Public Lavatories).	
60	31/03/2020	CDALC	Invitation to complete survey on the need for government support for organisations losing money through managing closed village halls during the Covid-19 lockdown. Forwarded to Jenny Watson. Then further email from CDALC retracted this.	
61	31/03/2020	CDALC	Document setting out DCC response to coronavirus/Covid-19 situation and flyer publicising support available. Email forwarded to all cllrs 31/3/20.	
62	01/04/2020	DCC	Press release announcing £1.4m funding pot for community and voluntary groups providing support during the Coronavirus pandemic. £100k extra has been allocated to Teesdale Action Partnership for groups providing grass roots support, and more flexibility allowed in County Councillors' use of their neighbourhood budgets, releasing revenue funding previously only for capital projects. Contact TAP direct for further details or how to apply.	

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63	02/04/2020	DCC	Press release about the County Council's quick response to processing support grants of either £10k or £25k to businesses (more than £43m to 3,575 businesses to date). Link provided to eligibility details.	
64	02/04/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus email 9(10): news that new Regulations to allow for remote meetings are imminent; additional guidance on furloughing of staff (public sector, where a budget is paid for from the public purse, are unlikely to receive the Job Retention Scheme funding); call for volunteers to help the County Durham Together Community (link can be provided); DCC stakeholder briefing document; suspension of all County Training Partnership training; notice of a Zoom practice meeting on 3 April.	
65	02/04/2020	DCC	(see item 62). Reminder that Teesdale Action Partnership has additional funding of £100k to support community and voluntary groups who are providing coronavirus pandemic support.	
66	02/04/2020	Calor	Reminder that application for £5 grants deadline is 10 April.	
67	02/04/2020	Durham Community Action	Covid-19 update: dedicated page on website with links to support agencies and volunteering guides; funding spotlight, volunteering advice, Food and Growing team have gardening advice; promotion of DCC's locate@durham.gov.uk ; links to public health sources.	
68	03/04/2020	DCC	Press release reassuring residents that they can still receive housing advice and support during the coronavirus outbreak.	
69	03/04/2020	HMRC Business Help and Support	Publication of new guidelines on Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme.	
70	03/04/2020	CDALC	Coronavirus email 10: notice about new Regulations allowing for remote meetings (though not obligatory) but still with public participation and access for press, alteration of frequency and occurrence without requiring further notice, removal of need for annual council meeting (therefore chairman stays in post until May 2021 if annual meeting is not held remotely), that notice of the meeting can be just on website; and notice that cemeteries should be closed except for funerals and burials (further details to follow).	