

## No return to face to face meetings for now

Following the government announcement of further easing of lockdown restrictions from 4 July, as at 26 June both NALC and SLCC strongly advise local councils to continue to meet remotely, without the need for face to face contact. The government rules still state that we should all work from home if we can.

Their joint statement reads:

Local councils have the powers to hold public meetings remotely by using video or telephone conferencing technology until May 2021 and so most councils will have no need to meet in person. Furthermore, local councils have the duty to allow the public to observe council meetings without placing restrictions on the number attending, which many council meeting venues will not be able to accommodate in a safe way at this time.

However, where a local council does have an identified need to hold a physical meeting, as they are unable to conduct council business any other way, they can consider doing so from 4th July. These meetings must be managed within the social distancing and ‘safer workplaces’ guidance produced by Government, which includes the requirement to conduct a risk assessment to determine if it is feasible and safe to hold a physical meeting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-launched-to-help-get-brits-safely-back-to-work>

It is important that this risk assessment is carried out, and any identified actions to reduce risk to attendees are implemented before any face to face meetings resume. Councils must keep documentation of this risk assessment and the reasons why the council has taken the decision to return to face to face meetings.

NALC will be further updating its guidance this week. Further information can be found at [www.nalc.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nalc.gov.uk/coronavirus)

***However, it is the view of ALCC that such meetings cannot go ahead. Gatherings of more than 6 people from more than two households is still prohibited, unless for weddings or funerals.***

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**Posted on:** 29/06/2020

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