

Financial year-end and AGAR

Following NALC's engagement with government around local council audit timeframes, final regulations are due to be made this week 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 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.

Guidance regarding meeting remotely

We are expecting guidance very soon from NALC about meeting remotely (the law was put in place on 4 April) and hopefully this will also have information about making decisions by email. We are receiving questions from clerks about the practicalities, but until we get clarification ourselves, we will wait until we receive guidance from NALC, which will be forwarded to you all.