

Title of Report:	Correspondence
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Annual Meeting
Date of Meeting:	30 May 2023
For Decision or For Information	FOR DECISION

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council operates as one effective and efficient corporate unit with a common purpose and culture
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration in relation to Council's Positions of Responsibility and External Appointments 2023-2026.

2.0 The following correspondence has been received:

2.1 **Karen Smyth, Head of Policy & Governance, NILGA (dated 31 March 2023)** (copy attached)

NILGA will seek:

- 8 members from each council (10 from Belfast) for the NILGA 'Full' membership. These nominations should reflect the political proportionality and diversity (in equality terms) of your council members.
- 1 member (who may or may not be one of the aforementioned 8) to sit on the Elected Member Development Policy and Learning Network. Other policy structures will be populated at a later date.
- Notification of 1 member to represent the council on the Political Partnership Panel (currently in abeyance). This nomination may attract Special Responsibility Allowance from your council.

2.1.1 **Sarah Little, Business Services Officer, NILGA (dated 23 May 2023)** (copy email correspondence available)

Extract

Further to the correspondence from Karen Smyth prior to the Elections, I have been asked to get in touch to indicate the party strength that we will be expecting when the nominations come through, calculations have been carried out by Karen to show the nominations that the council would have to NILGA if they followed either a d'Hondt process or using percentages:

*D'Hondt – SF – 3 places, DUP – 3 places, All – 1 place, UUP – 1 place,
Percentage – SF – 2 places, DUP – 3 places, All – 1 place, UUP – 1 place,
SDLP – 1 place*

Please note that NILGA do not stipulate the way that a council must nominate to the NILGA Full Membership, we do ask that it be representative of the council's political make up.

We would also be grateful if we could have the numbers of each party that will make up the councils nominations as soon as possible and by 8th June 2023.

2.2 Northern Housing Council Representation on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Board, dated 12 May 2023 (copy attached)

From the Housing Council's membership it will nominate individuals to the Department, and those individuals will complete an application form, and take part in the appointment process as laid down in the guidance from the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

To avoid any ineligible nominees Council is reminded that if a Councillor has been selected to serve on the Board of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in accordance with the Commissioner for Public appointments NI Code of Practice they can only serve a maximum of ten years or two terms of appointment. Therefore, anyone who has previously served 10 years on the Housing Executive Board or served two terms of appointment, regardless of the duration, will be ineligible and cannot be considered.

In addition as part of the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice the Department in conjunction with the Chair of the ALB Board is required to conduct a Skills Audit of the Board to which the appointments are being made.

The result of the most recent audit for the Housing Executive Board has indicated the following desirable skills:-

Innovation skills

- Partnership/collaborative working
- Strategic delivery
- Critical thinking
- Delivering efficiencies
- Improving productivity
- Demonstrable integrity and transparency
- Balancing inward and outward focus
- Managing risk to deliver outcomes

2.3 National Association of Councillors, NI Region 16 May 2023 (NAC NI Information Sheet attached)

Correspondence has been received from Councillor Joe Boyle on behalf of the National Association of Councillors, NI Region (NAC) to ask each council to nominate 8 NAC delegates to represent their councillors at NAC Members meetings from June 2023.

The preferred duration of the NAC delegates' appointment is for the full term of office i.e. 4 years, to enable Councillor continuity.

NAC Members Meetings take place bi-monthly, usually on the 3rd Wednesday and the venue rotates around each council region. Invitations and papers are sent by email to NAC delegates and councils prior to each meeting. The annual meeting schedule can be viewed on the Meetings Page of the NAC Website by clicking this link <http://www.nac-ni.org/meetings.htm>

2.4 Graham Thompson, Chief Executive Officer, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (copy attached)

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust seek the following appointments:

- 4 members of the Board of CCGHT;
- 1 member of the management group of the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1 member of the management group of the Causeway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1 member of the management group of the Binevenagh Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1 member of the steering group of the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site.

The Council has been represented on the Board by Sandra Hunter (since 2012), Margaret Anne-McKillop (since 2015) and Oliver McMullan and Sharon McKillop (both since 2019). The policy of the Heritage Trust is that (in line with the policy relating to all Board members) Councillors should serve a maximum of two 4-year terms.

3.0 It is recommended that Council consider the correspondence.

To: Council Chief Executives
Cc. Democratic Services Officers

31st March 2023

Dear Chief Executive

NILGA Reconstitution post 18th May 2023 Local Government Election

In the run up to the 2023 local government elections, which are being held a few weeks later than is the norm, I felt it was important to contact you to outline some key issues and dates, per the short schedule below, to ensure awareness and understanding of the information we need from councils, and the relevant timeline.

The process involved by way of nominations to NILGA and to enable us to populate councillors on outside bodies through NILGA, is relatively simple.

Key Dates and Issues – Council Elections and Immediate Next Steps

- 18th May – Council Elections, 462 members returned
- 23rd May – Regional d’Hondt (ALL NI) calculations and preparation of appointments table by NILGA. NILGA will write to each council in relation to their possible proportional representation to the Association.
- **NILGA will seek:**
 - **8 members from each council (10 from Belfast) for the NILGA ‘Full’ membership. These nominations should reflect the political proportionality and diversity (in equality terms) of your council members.**
 - **1 member (who may or may not be one of the aforementioned 8) to sit on the Elected Member Development Policy and Learning Network.** Other policy structures will be populated at a later date.
 - **Notification of 1 member to represent the council on the Political Partnership Panel (currently in abeyance).** This nomination may attract Special Responsibility Allowance from your council.
- 8th June - council AGMs completed
- 23rd June – AGM and NILGA Executive Committee – Seamus Heaney Homeplace

We are aware that **Derry City & Strabane** and **Belfast City Council** will be working through nominations on 20th and 23rd June respectively. It would be immensely helpful if those councils can send through a draft ‘party breakdown’ in terms of NILGA representation to the NILGA Office by 7th June, with names to follow after their nomination meetings.

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB

Tel: 028 9079 8972 email: office@nilga.org web: www.nilga.org twitter: @NI_LGA

Please feel free to come back to me at any point about the information received. This will be an important electoral period for local government in Northern Ireland and, as such, NILGA wishes to ensure that the elected council representatives working regionally and on behalf of local government nationally on UK wide investment, pay, performance and other policy bodies, are of the highest calibre possible.

With thanks for your co-operation and support as always.

Yours faithfully



Karen Smyth
Head of Policy and Governance

Local Government Chief Executive's

By e-mail

Paul Price
Director of Social Housing Policy and
Oversight
Department for Communities
Level 3 Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG
email: paul.price@communities-ni.gov.uk

12 May 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Northern Housing Council Representation on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Board

Following the forthcoming Local Government Council Elections, Local Councils will as part of their role nominate a Councillor to serve as their representative on the Northern Ireland Housing Council.

From the Housing Council's membership it will then nominate individuals to the Department, and those individuals will complete an application form, and take part in the appointment process as laid down in the guidance from the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

To avoid any ineligible nominees I would remind you that if a Councillor has been selected to serve on the Board of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive **in accordance with the Commissioner for Public appointments NI Code of Practice they can only serve a maximum of ten years or two terms of appointment.**

Therefore, anyone who has previously served 10 years on the Housing Executive Board or served two terms of appointment, **regardless of the duration**, will be ineligible and cannot be considered.

I would be grateful if this could be borne in mind and draw this to the attention of the Council when they are making their representation to the Housing Council.

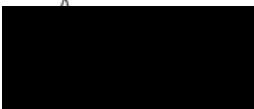
In addition as part of the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice the Department in conjunction with the Chair of the ALB Board is required to conduct a Skills Audit of the Board to which the appointments are being made.

The result of the most recent audit for the Housing Executive Board has indicated the following desirable skills:-

- Innovation skills
- Partnership/collaborative working
- Strategic delivery
- Critical thinking
- Delivering efficiencies
- Improving productivity
- Demonstrable integrity and transparency
- Balancing inward and outward focus
- Managing risk to deliver outcomes

I trust you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Price



NAC

National Association of Councillors
Northern Ireland Region

About the NAC

The National Association of Councillors, Northern Ireland Region (NAC) is the only organisation that is run by Northern Ireland councillors from all parties and none to represent their interests and provide information, advice and an all-party voice on matters that are relevant to the councillor role.

The organisation was set up 30 years ago in 1993, when local councillors decided that they needed a strong local representative body as well as belonging to the NAC UK. All 462 councillors in Northern Ireland are members of the NAC through a corporate membership scheme which is subscribed to by the 11 councils, each council is asked to nominate up to 8 NAC delegates to represent their councillors and those delegates are invited to attend NAC Members Meetings.

NAC Members Meetings are held bi-monthly with dates and details circulated in advance and published on the Meetings Page of the [NAC NI Website](#). All councillors are welcome to attend but only the official council nominated NAC delegates can vote or make proposals and decisions.

The NAC NI Executive Committee (EC) govern the organisation and NAC delegates can be nominated to serve on the EC at the NAC NI Annual General Meeting or at a NAC NI Special General Meeting. The EC meet monthly and comprises of a Chair, Senior Vice Chair, Junior Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Women's Representative, and other members who are selected from across the various political parties including an independent representative.

What the NAC do for Councillors

- ❖ Communicate with members through information emails, newsletters, and the [NAC-NI website](#) providing information on changes in legislation, revised allowances, conferences, training, and other matters affecting councillors.
- ❖ The NAC NI bi-monthly [Members Meetings](#) provide a forum for opinions and concerns to be voiced, and the opportunity for information and experiences to be shared.
- ❖ Advice or signposting is given to councillors relating to well-being, allowances, tax, welfare benefits, expenses, pension, elections, ethics, and any other concerns that are raised.
- ❖ Will lobby local authorities, ministers, government departments and other bodies on issues that are of concern for councillors when necessary and make collective responses to government consultations on matters affecting councillors.

The NAC encourages all members to engage and get actively involved, everyone is welcome to participate as this will strengthen the organisation and our "councillor family".



Current Aims and Objectives

- *To make representation on behalf of NAC members with the aim of achieving equality for all councillors across the Northern Ireland region.*

The NAC has been campaigning for councillor equality for several years and their request for an independently led review of the councillor role is currently being progressed with the Department for Communities (DfC).

- *To address matters that affect councillors' well-being and provide appropriate information and advice accordingly.*

The NAC responds to individual councillors' requests for assistance and gives advice on matters of personal concern. When necessary, the NAC will make representation in confidence on behalf of councillors, to councils, government officials and other organisations.

- *To strive for adequate and appropriate training to be available for councillors to assist them with conducting the role.*

The NAC organises conferences and workshops on topics relevant to councillors. Nationally arranged events also provide the opportunity for NI councillors to engage with councillors from the other UK regions.

By councillors acting collectively on issues that are of common concern, the NAC has made major gains in councillors' terms and conditions and past achievements are listed below.

NAC Achievements

Over recent years, the NAC has:

- Achieved a councillors' pension scheme with death in-service benefit.
- Achieved a dependants' carers' allowance.
- Achieved Code of Conduct insurance for councillors across all 11 councils.
- Achieved refunds of GDPR fees from 6 councils before exemption.
- Given advice on making tax and expenses claims to HMRC.
- Represented councillors' interests during the local government re-organisation.
- Achieved an Independent Remuneration Panel which increased councillors' allowances for the newly formed council areas.
- Achieved severance payments for councillors following the local government re-organisation.

**Mr David Jackson
Chief Executive Officer
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
Coleraine
BT52 1EY**

23 May 2025

Dear David,

CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS HERITAGE TRUST

I'm sure that you're glad to get the elections over and that you're looking forward to a new group of elected members being in place.

In the coming weeks the Council will be allocating a range of positions for Councillors to take in addition to their already extensive responsibilities.

We at Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust seek the following appointments:

- 4 members of the Board of CCGHT;
- 1 member of the management group of the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1 member of the management group of the Causeway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1 member of the management group of the Binevenagh Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1 member of the steering group of the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site.

The Council has been represented on the Board by Sandra Hunter (since 2012), Margaret Anne-McKillop (since 2015) and Oliver McMullan and Sharon McKillop (both since 2019). The policy of the Heritage Trust is that (in line with the policy relating to all Board members) Councillors should serve a maximum of two 4-year terms.

Joan Baird represented the Council on the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB management group.

Chris McCaw represented the Council on the Causeway Coast AONB management group.

No appointment was made to the Binevenagh AONB management group. (It should be pointed out that this group has not been meeting extensively in recent years and its activities have been undertaken by the Board of the Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme.)

The Old Bank, 27 Main Street, Armoy, Ballymoney, Co. Antrim, BT53 8SL

E - graham@ccght.org M - 07568 158 061 T - 028 2075 2100 W - ccght.org

Company Reg. No: NI43293

Charity Ref No: NIC106064



Chris McCaw represented the Council on the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS steering group.

Membership of the Board is a fully registered position with returns relating to membership being submitted to Companies House and the Charities Commission. Board meetings take place 4 times a year, one of which coincides with the Trust's AGM. Members are expected to be fully cognisant of the activities of the Trust with full and appropriate paperwork being provided. Board members regularly attend CCGHT events in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area and beyond and are expected to participate in at least one sub-committee. CCGHT meetings usually take place during the day.

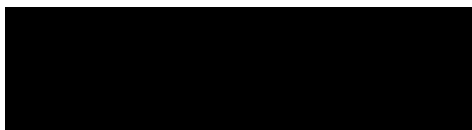
In addition to the elected members, a member of staff may attend Board meetings as an Observer. A member of staff is also expected to attend meetings of the AONB management groups and the WHS steering group co-ordinating all interest from the council except for Planning as a Planning Officer attends in their own right.

To ensure balance on the Board of the Trust we would urge that members come from different parties, represent different DEAs yet have an interest in protected landscape management, sustainable tourism and/or rural diversification. The last Board had an impeccable political balance, however, all CCGBC Board appointees represented the former Moyle Council area.

I should also add that the Board of the Heritage Trust is exceptionally grateful for core and project funding received from the Council and looks forward to many more years of fruitful partnership working.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course and welcoming new and familiar faces into the CCGHT family.

Your sincerely,



GRAHAM THOMPSON
Chief Executive Officer