

COUNCILS ARE KEY TO RECOVERY & STABILITY NILGA PRESIDENT & OFFICE BEARERS PRESS WESTMINSTER & STORMONT

Our vision: Strong local government, investing in local people and places, with 11 councils empowered, skilled and resourced, delivering high-quality leadership, services and representation for the whole community, working in innovative, accountable partnership.

Across Stormont and in Westminster, during June, NILGA has firmly re-stated this vision for local government as key to a better democracy and improved public services across NI, a vision and framework which is right now being reviewed constructively by all 11 councils.



Cllr Matt Garrett



Cllr Robert Burgess



Cllr Frances Burton



Ald Alan McDowell



Cllr Martin Kearney

NILGA OFFICE BEARERS

Outgoing NILGA President, Cllr Matt Garrett, Belfast City Council, addressed the all-council NILGA Executive, hosted in hybrid format at the Lagan Valley Island headquarters of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council earlier in this month. His message was one of productive, achieving, councils, offering stability and innovation. But the message must be heard:

“The finance. The collective policy making. The speed of partnership decision taking. The lobbying of MPs, Stormont Ministers & Committees, Westminster Ministers – NILGA putting councils at the heart of things. Do they do what we want? Not always. Do we get what we want? Not always. Will we give up? Never. We have gone as councils to places we did not initially want to be, like losing over £10 million a month as a sector and facing an impossible rate setting period, and making it possible, in fact, affordable”.

Cllr. Robert Burgess, incoming NILGA President, Newry Mourne and Down District Council, asserted that ***“NILGA has and will continue to be the constant, hardworking and effective voice of local government”.*** He added that ***“Our economy, our environment, social cohesion, and the very essence of local democracy needs well-resourced councils working as a collegiate team, as Cllr Garrett has shown in the past year, and I will demonstrate in the year ahead”.***

Local Government’s Vision & Development – A Framework to the 2023 Election
is out for consultation now with all 11 councils



MEETINGS - UK LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM & MINISTER LUKE HALL MP

NILGA met with the Associations in Scotland, England and Wales in a Policy & Investment Summit on **3rd June**. The multi-billion, multi-annual Shared Prosperity & Levelling Up funds and improved relationships at a National and devolved level were discussed. The [MHCLG](#) including Minister Luke Hall MP, met with NILGA on **9th June**, and has promised more investment, while NILGA has requested greater input into the policy control of the above funds. A meeting with **Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick MP**, is due to take place soon and a joint **sustainable finance** summit, to be held in the last quarter of 2021 and organised by the English LGA with input from N. Ireland's councils, particularly the Association of Local Government Finance Officers, ALGFO.

NILGA NETWORKS



Cllr Mark Glasgow

Reform, Devolution and Improvement Network

At its meeting on 17th June, Cllr. Mark Glasgow, Chair of the RDI Network, committed his team to driving local government's response to the Review of Public Administration report now being developed through the Department for Communities.

"As we head into the summer period and deadlines like national and Stormont government reviews of Covid restrictions, it would be easy to concentrate solely on the short term. However, this Group has firmly got councils' future in its sights and one of our roles is to ensure the RPA Review produces stronger local government that has the powers and resources to do locally what is needed".

The RDI group also commenced transformative work on a post 2021, post Covid, approach to Shared Services – owned and driven by 11 councils. Cllr. Glasgow added: *"I am also aware that as we move into what I truly hope is post Covid recovery, money is tight - but demands of our services are through the roof, whether recycling, economic development, waste management, preventative health, leisure and community and regulatory work performed by planning, building control and environmental Health. NILGA's Kick Start for Shared Services paper looks at how councils further working together can improve front line, local service delivery by sharing our resources. It is a first cut and recognises what's needed, what currently works and what doesn't".*

NILGA's Kick Start Shared Services initiative will be worked on in partnership during the summer.

Member Development

Councillor Development continues to be a key priority for NILGA, with our latest codesigned annual Regional Programme of Councillor Development for 2021-22 agreed by the NILGA Regional Councillor Development Network. Implementation of this 21st century councillor suite of learning and development for councillors is underway. NILGA has written to council Chief Executive's seeking nominations for councillor participation in our accredited modular learning provision in Leadership and Planning.

The NILGA Local Planning Leadership Programme 2021-22, a seven module ILM accredited programme tailored to the councillors role in planning in NI, will commence in September 2021.

Also, the NILGA Leadership Programme 2021-22, a seven module CPD accredited Programme, will also commence in September 2021. The Leadership Programme will help councillors to develop the practical skills necessary to be more effective, highlighting the roles councillors/participants currently play and should look to play in the future, and to overcome the major challenges and barriers councillors face in playing these roles. Councillors will have a chance to catch up with the latest thinking on local government leadership and to develop new approaches to the work as a councillor.

The dynamic wider Regional Programme 2021-22, which also commences in September 2021, also includes masterclasses, workshops and compliance based learning in:

- Civil Contingencies / Emergency Planning
- Regeneration
- Climate Change- Carbon Literacy
- Data and evidence
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Lobbying skills
- Scrutiny and Challenge
- Code of Conduct
- Local Government Finance for Councillors
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Shared Leadership and Co-production.

NILGA looks forward to your valued participation and engagement in this 2021-22 Regional Programme delivery. **Further information, please contact Fiona Douglas, NILGA Regional Development Manager** f.douglas@nilga.org

RECENT PRESS RELEASE/STATEMENTS

NILGA's Reform, Devolution and Improvement Network - Member and Officer Team meeting 17th June, Cllr. Mark Glasgow, Chair, strongly reasserted the need to strengthen the role of councils in Northern Ireland. [Press Release](#)

NILGA meets MHCLG Minister Luke Hall MP - NILGA relayed its concerns and solutions over EU Successor & Levelling Up Funding in NI, in its first political meeting with Housing, Communities and Local Government Minister Luke Hall MP. [Press Release](#)



Cllr Steven Corr

NI Assembly's Infrastructure Committee - Review of the Planning Act - Response from Cllr Steven Corr, Chair of NILGA's Place-shaping and Infrastructure Policy and Learning Network following the Committee session. [Press Release](#)

Energy Infrastructure & Supply top of the agenda at NILGA meeting - 'NI Energy Strategy' - NILGA's Place-shaping and Infrastructure Network meeting with the Department for the Economy and SONI. [Press Release](#)



Winners of the 2019 Translink Ulster in Bloom Competition officially recognised - The award presentations across NI were delayed due to the COVID 19 Pandemic. [Full Details](#)



NEW COUNCIL MAYORS & CHAIRS

NILGA would like to wish all our newly elected Mayors, Chairs and Deputies every success in this important role and would encourage your engagement with the Association to further develop our relationship and to support the vital work of the local government sector.



List of local government Mayors, Chairs and Deputies for the 2021/22.

Antrim & Newtownabbey BC	Ald Billy Webb, Mayor & Cllr Stephen Ross, Deputy
Ards & North Down BC	Cllr Mark Brooks, Mayor & Cllr Robert Adair, Deputy
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC	Ald Glenn Barr, Lord Mayor & Cllr Jackie Donnelly, Deputy
Belfast City Council	Cllr Kate Nicholl, Lord Mayor & Ald Tom Haire, Deputy
Causeway Coast & Glens BC	Cllr Richard Holmes, Mayor & Cllr Ashleen Schenning, Deputy
Derry City & Strabane DC	Ald Graham Warke, Mayor & Cllr Christopher Jackson, Deputy
Fermanagh & Omagh DC	Cllr Errol Thompson, Chair & Cllr Chris McCaffrey, Deputy
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	Ald Stephen Martin, Mayor & Cllr Tim Mitchell, Deputy
Mid & East Antrim BC	Cllr William McCaughey, Mayor & Cllr Matthew Armstrong, Deputy
Mid Ulster District Council	Cllr Paul McClean, Chair & Cllr Christine McFlynn, Deputy
Newry, Mourne & Down DC	Cllr Cathy Mason, Chair & Cllr Oonagh Magennis, Deputy

CONSULTATION RESPONSES WITH LINKS

Name, Department or Stakeholder	Link
Defra via DAERA: Extended Producer Responsibility	NILGA Response
Defra via DAERA: Deposit return Scheme	NILGA Response
Assembly Health Committee: Health and Social Care Bill	NILGA Response
SONI: shaping our Electricity Future	NILGA Response
Draft NILGA response to DfE on an Energy Strategy for NI - Consultation on Policy Options	Draft NILGA Response
Policy Options for the new Energy Strategy - Consultation Documents	
Housing Supply Strategy – Consultation Documents	The final NILGA & SOLACE response will be available on the NILGA website

VALUE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN #COUNCILSMAKEITHAPPEN



The 4th phase of the **#councilsmakeithappen** campaign commenced on the 24th May focusing on 'Healthy Councils, Healthy Communities' and the key role that councils play in the health and wellbeing of citizens.

On the 1st July we launch theme 5 of the campaign focusing on the Tourism offering across our 11 council areas and how this supports

our local economies. **More information** [HERE](#)

TRANSLINK ULSTER IN BLOOM 2021

Co-ordinated by NILGA, Translink Ulster in Bloom showcases the partnership work between councils and local community 'In Bloom' Groups. The campaign criteria, Horticulture, Environment and Community, help to instil local pride, create awareness of the environment and biodiversity, and encourage community participation and involvement for those of all ages and abilities. **The 2021 campaign will be officially launched this week.** **More information** [HERE](#)



REVIEWS

Planning - In addition to the response provided to DfI on the review of the implementation of the **Planning Act**, in recent months NILGA has been working with the Department as part of the Infrastructure Minister's Planning Engagement Partnership. A report is in preparation for the Minister and it is anticipated that the Partnership's recommendations will be published in the Autumn, when an event for councillors is planned.

RPA Review - Work on the RPA review has commenced following Covid related delays, NILGA is keen to ensure that the impact of reform both financial and non financial is comprehensively dealt with. As part of the review, NILGA would welcome the inclusion of proposals to be consulted upon to see more powers and resources being devolved below Stormont and look forward to playing a full part in a transformative Review covering our entire Public Administration.

Community Planning - EY was commissioned in February 2020 to facilitate a number of workshops to agree the short-term actions that need to be taken to implement the recommendations from the Gallagher Report. The original timeline for delivery was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result, the workshops recommenced in January 2021, attended by members of a newly established Working Group, made up of representatives from NICS Departments and Local Government. Representation also included members from the Programme for Government (PfG) team, ensuring that the future direction of Community Planning is aligned to the new PfG currently under development, and vice versa.

A prioritised implementation plan is in the final stages of preparation, outlining a feasible and practical way forward for Community Planning detailing the most critical actions that need to be taken forward in the next 12 months. A NILGA event is being organised with the Working Group for September 2021 to brief elected members on the direction of travel, to develop member awareness of critical issues, and to support democratic oversight of the plan.

ROADS RECOVERY FUND IN 2021/22



Infrastructure Minister Nichola Mallon has announced £17million for a Roads Recovery Fund from her 2021/22 capital budget. The £17m funding for the Roads Recovery Fund should address areas of immediate concern across the road network. **More Information**

NILGA MEETINGS

Date	Meeting	Contact
28 th Jun	Health, Social and Environmental Wellbeing Network – Climate Action	k.smyth@nilga.org
6 th Jul	NILGA Office Bearer Briefing	a.mcgrath@nilga.org
26 th Jul	NILGA Office Bearers Review Meeting	d.mccallan@nilga.org
3 rd Aug	NILGA Office Bearer Briefing	a.mcgrath@nilga.org
13 th Aug	NILGA AGM, Belfast Castle – Hybrid Meeting	s.little@nilga.org
17 th Aug	NILGA Office Bearer Briefing	a.mcgrath@nilga.org
31 st Aug	NILGA Office Bearer Briefing	a.mcgrath@nilga.org
10 th Sept	NILGA Executive Meeting	s.little@nilga.org
18 th Nov	Local Government Conference – Bangor	m.maher@nilga.org

Please visit our website and Twitter for regular updates.

web: www.nilga.org twitter: [@NI_LGA](https://twitter.com/NI_LGA)

#councilsmakeithappen

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