

Councils as Employers

NILGA is also responsible for supporting elected members on a of bodies responsible for carrying out employers functions, including NIJC, NJC, NARE, CEEP and LGRJF. The members of these groups negotiate with the unions and take decisions in the interests of the twenty six Northern Ireland Councils as employers.

In total there are 14 positions available, nominated by the parties.

NILGA in the EU

Local government appointments to the various European Programme monitoring and steering committees and sub-groups are made using the d'Hondt process. Nominations will be to the committees for the current 2007-13 programme of funding.

Nominations to EU and International Bodies

Local government is represented, through NILGA, on a number of international outside bodies,:



- Committee of the Regions;
- Commonwealth Local Government Forum;
- Congress for Local and Regional Authorities of Europe;
- Council for European Municipalities and Regions
- Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership

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YOUR INTEREST IN NILGA MEMBERSHIP IS WELCOMED.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS ON THE VERGE OF MAJOR TRANSFORMATION AND YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND WILL ACT AS A CHAMPION FOR COUNCILS AND AS A BEACON FOR PRACTICAL, CONTEMPORARY CHANGE, WHICH WILL BENEFIT THE CONSTITUENTS YOU SERVE

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

The Voice of Local Government

Guide to NILGA for Prospective Members



Tel: (028)9079 8972

What is NILGA?

NILGA, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, is **your** representative body which supports elected members in district councils across Northern Ireland.

NILGA represents and promotes the interests of local authorities at all levels and in the many forms of government in NI and is supported by the main political parties.

The objectives of NILGA are:

To be the **voice** of strong, democratic local government;

To provide a dynamic **structure** for all Councils to champion the cause of local democracy through elected member involvement in key decisions affecting local authorities within a wider Northern Ireland agenda.

To bring local issues, collective proposals and key information to central government and other sectors to ensure that local government through democratic representation is given a positive professional standing across Northern Ireland.

To ensure that the **elected member is collectively and inclusively** involved in key, relevant government initiatives supporting and supported by other bodies, putting local government forward as an equal partner in the changing times we work and live in.

NILGA works towards achieving these objectives through:

- **Building strong relationships**
- **Strong negotiation, policy development and lobbying work**
- **Leading on the reform of local government with key partners**
- **Effective and innovative communication and engagement**
- **Promoting and supporting councillors**

NILGA Membership in Context

The coming four years will transform local government. Local councils can actively work together to shape and influence the outcome.



Mayors and Chairs Meeting 2010

BETWEEN 2011 AND 2015, NILGA WILL

- Negotiate with central government on consultations, transfers of functions, modernisation and reform, in partnership, as the democratic underpinning of change;
- Research and share examples of local government good practice and will showcase best practice from councils in Northern Ireland;
- Bring a menu of investment choices from EU for local authorities and lever an additional £2 million+ into local economies between now and 2013.
- Co-ordinate key programmes of information and work in areas like waste management, planning, local government pay and conditions, investment in infrastructure and elected member development

NILGA works because elected members and council officers work with us - every project is member led and officer supported.

NILGA ensures that the right people are in the right place, at the right time, with the right information, talking to the right representative.

How can I be involved?

Congratulations on your election. If you would like to represent your council on NILGA, please let your local party group leader know in advance of your council AGM.

Nominations to NILGA are made at the council AGM, using a process to ensure that the council's representation broadly reflects the party political pattern of the Council. This may be achieved by the use of the d'Hondt system, proportionality or by using any other fair and equitable system.

NILGA uses the 'Total Eligible Electorate' figure for the council area to calculate the number of elected member places your council holds on the Association.

NILGA receives 154 members from councils. The NILGA membership role involves:

- attending bi-monthly NILGA meetings and ensuring key issues are democratically and inclusively assessed
- Contributing to the formulation of sound policies to enable positive profile for and positioning of our councils within

central government and other key negotiating channels

- participating in discussions of strategic concern to councils and developing consensus actions
- Representing the interest of your council within NILGA and to communicate NILGA business back to your council.

From the council-sourced membership, the political parties nominate to NILGA positions using the d'Hondt mechanism.

Each party with 6 or more members on NILGA can nominate an Office Bearer.

The NILGA Executive has 28 members, who attend monthly meetings, and in addition to their full member role, are required to:

- focus on high-level policy and strategic issues
- Develop and implement corporate priorities
- Provide strategic direction and planning for the Association

NILGA develops policy through a system of Working Groups. Chairs and vice-chairs are party nominees

Proposed core working groups

- Waste and Environment
- Modernisation, Communication and Reform
- Planning
- Inter-regional / European Union Policy and Practice
- Rural Development
- Employment and People Development

As well as ensuring the effective running of the group, the Chairs act as spokesperson for the Association and for local government on their relevant subject area. Some have additional responsibilities.

