



**MINUTES OF MEMBERS' MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 20 JULY 2022 HELD AT THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CLOONAVIN, COLERAINE & BY TEAMS**

ATTENDEES

Aldermen

Frazer Agnew
Bill Keery

David Drysdale (apologised for late arrival)

Alan McDowell

Stephen Moutray

Councillors

Beth Adger
Joe Boyle

Terry Andrews
Hazel Legge

Alison Bennington
Billy Webb

Guests

Ald Yvonne Boyle
Mayor Ivor Wallace

Ald Michelle Knight-McQuillan

Cllr Leanne Peacock

Kate Wilson (Admin Assistant)

TEAMS ATTENDEES

Aldermen

Angus Carson
Keith Kerrigan

Maurice Devenney
Stephen Martin

Derek Hussey (Guest)
Sharon McKillop

Councillors

Robert Burgess
Christine McFlynn
Martin Reilly
Errol Thompson

Charlie Casey
Derek McKinney
Drew Thompson
Victor Warrington

Valerie Harte
Vera McWilliam
Eddie Thompson

APOLOGIES

Aldermen

Alan Bresland
Tommy Nicholl

Amanda Grehan
Jim Rodgers

Michael Henderson
Tommy Sandford

Councillors

Dermot Curran
Peter Johnston
Dermot Nicholl

Timothy Gaston
Tracy Kelly
Dale Pankhurst

Conor Heaney
JJ Magee
Michael Ruane

1. Chairman's Welcome

The NAC Chair, Cllr Andrews opened the meeting welcoming those in The Chamber and those On-line, he thanked the CC&G Mayor Ivor Wallace, his colleagues, and the staff at CC&G for their warm welcome and the IT Department members for taking the time to ensure the technology is working for this NAC meeting, he then introduced Mayor Wallace.

Mayor Wallace welcomed all saying it was “encouraging to see so many of us here in person after the challenges we faced in recent years” and “to those who are in attendance online I’m very glad that you are able to join us in this way as well”. He spoke about the beautiful setting and surrounding coastline saying he hoped some would get a chance to enjoy that later today. Mayor Wallace said, “it is important that Councillors from all areas have an opportunity to network and collaborate effectively on matters that affect our citizens and lie at the heart of all communities.” He went on to explain how when his Council reached out to the NAC about the provision of Women’s Initiates and following that the CC&G Women’s Working Group Chair, Cllr Peacock, and Vice Chair, Ald Knight-McQuillan were invited to make a presentation today. He invited attendees in The Chamber to stay for lunch and finished off by thanking the Council’s IT Department for assisting in the meetings smooth operation.

Cllr Andrews then informed of the following bereavements since the last NAC Members’ Meeting:

Cllr Glenn Finlay of Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council who passed away on 15 June
Ald Alan McDowell’s sister, Susan
Cllr Micky Ruane’s brother, John
Cllr Bennington’s brother, Adrian
Cllr Adger’s Great Grandson
Tom Gallagher the husband of our NAC National President Marie Garrity

He offered condolences on behalf of the NAC and asked for a minute’s silence to be observed in respect.

Apologies that have been received by email, marked in the Attendance Book, and informed today are noted on Page 1 of this document.

2. Minutes of last Meeting

The minutes of the last Members’ Meeting which took place on 25 May 2022 were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record, as proposed by Cllr Adger, and seconded by Cllr Webb.

3. Officers Reports – Treasurer, Secretary and National Chair

Treasurer’s Report

Ald Carson said he was delighted to be here this morning and apologised that he may be a little short of breath. He informed that the balance that he is advising today is the latest information received on the Bank Statement two days ago and that all Councils have now paid their Annual Subscriptions. He informed the balance in the Current Account and the total amount of Outgoings over the past month.

Ald Keery asked what the balance this year is in comparison to this time last year, the Treasurer said he did not have this information but confirmed that we are in “good standing” .

The Treasurer’s report was approved as proposed by Ald Keery and seconded by Cllr Legge.

Secretary’s Report

Cllr Boyle said, “Good Morning to those that are tuning in on Hybrid and to those that are present in The Chamber”. He continued with his report as follows:

Bereavements

As already touched upon by the Chair, there have been several deaths since last Members Meeting and we sympathise with those concerned. Letters and sympathy/mass cards were sent on behalf of the NAC, and I would ask members if they are aware of any bereavements, concerning all parties and none, it would be appreciated if you can pass this information on, and I have already contacted all parties asking them to let us know of any bereavements.

Cllr Legge advised that she had just received a message from Ald Sonia Copeland that her mother has passed away. Cllr Andrews thanked Cllr Legge and asked her to pass on our condolences. Cllr Boyle also thanked Cllr Legge saying, "we will act on that accordingly".

Causeway Coast & Glens Women's Working Group

Following a request for information from Causeway Coast & Glens Women's Working Group on the 4 June, the NAC EC invited them to present to us today. Their Chair, Councillor Leanne Peacock and Vice Chair, Alderman Michelle Knight-McQuillan will be making a presentation with Q&A's later this morning, this has been slotted in to the Agenda under Any Other Business.

Annual Subscription Invoices

All councils have now paid their annual subscriptions to NAC.

Advice NI Presentation to NILGA

This presentation was sent to all Members on 11 July 2022.

NAC National Meetings and Conferences

A National Executive meeting took place in South Shields on 30 May 2022, the National Chair Cllr Casey was unable to attend so Cllr Andrews stood in for him and chaired the meeting, Cllr Adger and Cllr Burgess were also in attendance.

Members from the NI region also attended the June Conference in Southport. Dates of the next events are on the Meetings Page of the NAC NI website and further details, when received, will be circulated to councils and all NAC members.

Update letter to all Councillors on Councillor Equality Campaign

On 7 June, an email and document detailing the Executive Committees'(EC) work on Councillor Equality was sent to all Members, with CE's copied in. This was as agreed at our last EC Meeting. Derry & Strabane DC noted this communication at their meeting on 30th June and their Governance and Strategic Planning Committee have contacted the NAC Chair, Cllr Andrews in relation to this inviting the NAC *"to make a presentation to Members regarding its representations on our behalf"*. This has been arranged for November and Cllr Andrews has asked me to accompany me and we will attend in-person as there is quite a lot in the documents provided.

There have been no other responses from the other Councils, and I would encourage Members that when the Chief Executives table this document at meetings I would be grateful if the NAC Delegates can speak on this to help and assist those on Council that are not Delegates, or you can refer them to speak to me.

Councillor Equality Meetings

A meeting has been arranged with the DfC Officials for 8 August 2022 in relation to the Councillors' Review process. Minister Hargey has been very good with keeping on top of this and this was the earliest date we could get. We have a cross-party Sub-Committee chaired by Ald McDowell and these members will attend.

We may have to get a venue ourselves for the meeting as DfC premises can only accommodate five visitors currently however, which would mean I am unable to attend however, I am working on that, and a pre-meeting is being arranged for the Sub-Committee to agree the format and agenda.

Covid-19 Additional Work by Councils and Councillors

I feel that there was a lot of effort put in by many people during this time going over and above the call such as the NHS who have been classed as heroes. However, there were another group of people called Councillors during that two-year period doing great work and I want to get feedback on that type of work that Councils and Councillors were doing during this time.

The EC has agreed that a letter is to be prepared to go out to all Councils and Councillors asking for details of additional work they have carried out during the pandemic, so this information can be available for future meetings and/or press enquiries.

The information gathered could also be used for strengthening our case with the Minister as part of the review demonstrating how Councillors excelled during the pandemic. Councillors were to the forefront, and many suffered severe Social Media abuse in relation to lack of Council Services etc which we had no control over as this was a government directive. As Minister Hargey was previously a Councillor this makes a difference in how she does understand us, and this information will be useful to have for our meetings with her Officials and to respond to press enquiries.

A discussion followed with many members contributing, during this Cllr Andrews advised that a letter requesting feedback will be sent out to Councillors and Councils next week.

End of Secretary's Report

Cllr Andrews thanked Cllr Boyle and his report was accepted as proposed by Ald Keery and seconded by Ald Drysdale.

Cllr Andrews handed over to Cllr Casey for the National Chair's report.

National Chair's Report

Cllr Casey thanked Cllr Andrews and advised that the last conference they were at was in Southport saying that the region is always well represented, and this shows the good working relationship that we have with other Councillors across the regions. He went on to say that the conference was very useful, and the topics were to be emailed to Councillors * adding that Councils in UK are resourced differently than us and it is interesting to learn about that.

Cllr Casey informed that he hopes to be at the next National Executive Meeting which is coming up in September and he asked Members to note that the National AGM will be held in November.

**Presentations from recent NAC UK Conferences can be accessed from the NAC NI Website on the Information page>> <http://www.nac-ni.org/information.htm> (these files are too large to send out by email).*

Cllr Andrews thanked Cllr Casey and the other officers for their reports saying that he is proud to represent our members both across the water and at LAMA and AILG events, and it does his heart good to see the support from NI at these events.

4. Any Other Business

Cllr Andrews introduced Cllr Peacock and Ald Knight-McQuillan the Chair and Vice Chair of CC&G Women's Working Group for their presentations.

NAC MEMBERS' MEETING MINUTES - WEDNESDAY 20 JULY 2022 IN COLERAINE

Following the presentations there was several supportive comments and positive feedback. Cllr Peacock said she would be happy for members to contact her in relation to this and will forward her details for the NAC to circulate to all members.

Cllr Boyle thanked Cllr Peacock and Ald Knight-McQuillan for their presentations and he explained the structure within the NAC on how Officers are appointed to the Executive Committee and the role of the NAC Women's Representative, he added that the NAC are here to representative all members, and everyone is welcome to request help or express any concerns and said members should get in touch with the NAC to request assistance if needed.

Cllr Andrews added his thanks to Cllr Peacock and Ald Knight-McQuillan for the very in depth and interesting insight to the Women's Working Group at CC&G saying he thoroughly enjoyed it and the input from members to the debate.

Another item was then raised under AOB by Cllr Webb explained how constituents have contacted him in relation to the problems they are facing with trying to get a doctor's appointment and their frustration with the waiting time for getting through by telephone to Doctors Surgeries. He put forward a proposal that the NAC write to the acting Minister for Health pointing out this major problem, Ald Moutray seconded this proposal stating that it was a major concern in his area too.

Cllr Andrews then thanked Mayor Ivor Wallace for the hospitality provided today at CC&G, he also thanked Sinéad Duggan, Democratic Services and Joanne Keen, Committee and Member Services Officer for co-ordinating all the arrangements at CC&G for today's meeting and the CC&G ICT Operations Manager Julie and her colleagues, Andrew and Chrissy who worked with us to get the meeting set-up and for being in attendance for support during the event.

5. Next Meeting Date

Our next Members Meeting will take place at 11am on Wednesday 21 September, hosted by Derry City and Strabane Council at The Guildhall with a Virtual Link for those joining from home. *Future meeting dates and venues are on the Meetings Page of the NAC NI Website*>> <http://www.nac-ni.org/meetings.htm>

Cllr Andrew ended the meeting thanking all attending The Chamber and those joining On-Line.

Decisions/Actions Summary	By
A letter is to be sent to all Councillors and Councils requesting feedback on work carried out during the pandemic (as detailed in the Secretary's Report).	JB
Contact details for CC&G Women's Working Group to be passed on to all Members.	JB
Write to the Minister for Health in relation to unacceptable wait times when contacting Doctor's surgeries and for getting an appointment	JB