



## **About Us**

The National Association of Councillors (NAC) Northern Ireland Region was set up almost 30 years ago, after local councillors decided they needed a strong local body as well as belonging to the UK National Association of Councillors.

The NAC are the only body that represents, and is run by, all Northern Ireland's 462 councillors.

The NAC aims to assist our members by providing information and advice that will help them when working within their communities, and for carrying out the roles they may hold within their councils.

The NAC lobbies local authorities, ministers, government departments and other relevant bodies on issues that are of concern for councillors and have made major gains in councillors' terms and conditions because of councillors acting collectively in their common interest.

## **What we do for Councillors**

We give advice to councillors with individual problems relating to *allowances, tax, welfare benefits, expenses, pension, elections, ethics, and any other concerns* that are raised

We provide information on changes in *legislation, revised allowances and other matters* affecting councillors and we *respond to government consultations* on matters affecting councillors.

We offer a forum for councillors to voice opinions and concerns, and exchange information and experience, through our *bi-monthly members' meetings*

We communicate regularly with our members by sending out *information emails, newsletters* and keeping the NAC NI *website* up to date

## **Our Achievements**

*Over recent years, we have:*

- 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 reorganisation
- Achieved an Independent Remuneration Panel which increased councillors' allowances for the newly formed council areas
- Achieved severance payments for councillors following the local government reorganisation



## **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 our request for an independently led review of the councillor role is currently being implemented.

- *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 council and 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 organise regular national conferences and workshops on topics relevant to councillors and these also provide the opportunity to engage with councillors from other UK regions.

The NAC are participating in the evolution of the Local Government Training Group by providing input on behalf of our members for future training needs.

## **Other Activities**

- The NAC acted on members' instructions to progress changes to the Code of Conduct for councillors by meeting with officials from the Department for Communities and the NI Local Gov Commissioner for Standards to address items of concern and seek resolution of problems encountered by our members. A revised Code of Conduct is now in progress.
- The NAC responds to requests from councils for support on different issues and to government consultations that may affect councillors.
- NAC Members participate at NILGA meetings and have one of their officers in attendance at NAC Executive Committee (EC) meetings to share organisational information.
- The NAC EC has developed a good working relationship with cross-border councillors through their representative bodies - AILG and LAMA for the sharing of information and discussing items of common interest.
- NAC Long Service Awards were introduced in 2018 and to date twelve councillors have received this award.
- The NAC provide sponsorship to NILGA for their Awards event and arrange a judging panel to examine the entries and decide upon a winner in the councillor's category.
- The NAC has sponsored the Social Enterprise Northern Ireland Awards ceremony for three years now.