



National Association of Councillors Northern Ireland Region Members' Newsletter August 2021

Activities Update

Councillor Equality

Members of the NAC Executive Committee (EC) had a very positive meeting with the Communities Minister, Ms Dierdre Hargey MLA, and officials from the DfC on 1st June 2021.

The Minister agreed to engage with the NAC on the issues raised by our members and offered to put a pathway in place for further engagement, initially with DfC officials, and then with her again in late summer.

A further meeting is scheduled for 12th August 2021 with DfC officials for - feedback on the points that we put forward at our last meeting; to discuss a timeline for progress; and to arrange a follow-up meeting with Minister Hargey. We will keep members updated.

NAC Meetings

In-person meetings have resumed for our EC and Members' Meetings.

As we are currently unable to use council premises for meetings, we have a Belfast venue secured for our monthly EC meetings and we are organising Members' Meetings to take place within the Mid Ulster region, which is central for all to travel to.

Requests have been received from members who are unable to attend, to join virtually and we are investigating the feasibility of running Hybrid Meetings.

NAC Business Plan Review

Covid-19 has had an impact on many businesses and following discussion at recent meetings, the EC are arranging for a review of the region's Business Plan.

This will include a projection of the financial requirements for operating the business over the coming years with a focus on evolving the organisation and taking into consideration any changes that may need to be introduced following the pandemic.

Upcoming Events



A Local Government Pension Scheme Information Session, specifically designed for Councillors, has been arranged in conjunction with our next Members Meeting taking place on

Wednesday 15 September 2021

at

**The Glenavon House Hotel
Cookstown**

Ruth Benson from the NILGOSC will be attending to provide a presentation that will include:

An overview of the Local Government Pension Scheme for Councillors

An explanation of the Annual Statement

Questions and Answers Session

This session will commence at 11am following our Members' Meeting which will be starting at the earlier time of 10.15am with a shortened agenda. **Places must be booked in advance by emailing: office@nac-ni.org**

A virtual link will not be available for this event.

Annual General Meeting

Further details will be circulated soon, in the meantime please save the date!





Information

Following on from our May Newsletter when we highlighted information on Handling Online Abuse and provided details of the 'Civility in Public Life' programme. Here are some ideas for rules that can be added to your social media profile to outline how you engage with people online by including a clear statement that users can be blocked, or posts deleted, if they fail to participate in a civil manner.

Rules of engagement

Welcome to my page, which aims to communicate my activities as a councillor.

If you wish to be a part of this online community, you must agree to abide by this code of digital engagement, which is designed to keep everyone safe.

RULE 1
Debate and disagreement are welcome on this page, but only if expressed with courtesy, respect and politeness.

RULE 2
Posts should not contain abuse, harassment, intimidation or threats of any form.

RULE 3
Posts should not contain any form of discrimination – including racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia or religious intolerance.

RULE 4
Posts should not spread false or unverified information.

RULE 5
For transparency reasons, users should not post anonymously.

If any of these rules are broken, page admins reserve the right to delete posts, block users and report content to the police if necessary.

It may not be possible to respond to all queries on this page due to time constraints - if you have specific enquiries or casework, please send directly to my official email.

Further details on the programme and to download the Infographic above, visit:-

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/civility-public-life>



This volunteer-led initiative was formed in 2020 in response to the pandemic and uses technology to connect community members across Northern Ireland with providers of support.

Through their website <https://communitycalling.ltd/> individuals and organisations can request support or offer support by simply answering a few questions.

Last month they launched the **#GoDigital Campaign** for the Voluntary and Community Sector whereby they will provide a bespoke package which they say will help organisations become more efficient, sustainable, and resilient by reducing their administration time and expenses. To find out more please visit >>

<https://communitycalling.ltd/godigital-campaign-for-the-third-sector/>