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**MINUTES OF THE MEMBERS' MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 17 APRIL 2019  
AT THE ISLAND CIVIC CENTRE, LISBURN**

**ATTENDEES**

Aldermen

Michael Henderson MBE (Chair)     Alan McDowell     Jim Speers MBE  
Tommy Sandford     Stephen Martin (Attendee)

Councillors

Joe Boyle (Secretary)     Billy Webb MBE     Michael Maguire  
Brian Bloomfield     Declan O'Loan     Valerie Harte  
Terry Andrews     Robert Burgess     Charlie Casey  
Michael Ruane

Kate Wilson (Admin Assistant)

**APOLOGIES**

Aldermen

Angus Carson (Treasurer)

Councillors

Stephen Moutray     Brian Heading     Joan Baird OBE  
Errol Thompson     Victor Warrington

Cllr Uel Mackin, the Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) welcomed the NAC Members to "The Premier Council" for today's meeting and he spoke of his partiality for his council. He said that Lisburn & Castlereagh will be a very different place in five to ten years' time due to an investment plan, which has been devised with cross-party input, for an energetic and demanding programme of work to be carried out. He stated that the Belfast City Council's City Deal will also be good for the future of the region and LCCC are glad to be involved.

Cllr Mackin concluded that this is a very busy time for everyone with the elections coming up and he apologised that he would be unable to stay for the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) presentation. He invited the NAC Members to return again to visit the LCCC Civic Centre and then welcomed Dr Andy Johnston from LGiU before handing over to the NAC Chairman, Ald Henderson. Ald Henderson thanked Cllr Mackin on behalf of the NAC and he asked Dr Johnston to start his presentation.

1. LGiU Presentation

This covered information on the LGiU and the services that they provide regionally, nationally and worldwide, the presentation was followed by a Q & A session. Ald Henderson, Cllr Boyle and all the NAC members thanked Dr Johnston for attending; a copy of his presentation was requested so that it can be circulated to all councillors.

2. Apologies

Those received by phone/email in advance and stated or ticked in the Attendance Book today are detailed above.

3. Minutes of last meeting

These were agreed by all as proposed by Cllr Burgess and seconded by Cllr Maguire.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

None.

5. Reports from officers

The Secretary, Cllr Boyle reported on behalf of the Treasurer advising the current account bank balance and he informed the members of the councils that have paid their annual fees to date.

The Secretary provided an update on the following items.

Items that were discussed and points made are noted below *in italics*.

- The Chairman, Cllr Andrews, Cllr Doyle and the Secretary attended the LAMA Spring Conference which was held in Carrick-on-Shannon on 6 & 7 March. All accommodation and conference events costs were covered by LAMA and a PowerPoint presentation on NAC NI was delivered as part of the seminar programme.  
*The Chairman explained how the invite came about and the high level of interest in our presentation, with many questions on how councillors here operate particularly in relation to no assembly being in place.*  
*Cllr Andrews said it was a very good conference and a lot was learned, the Secretary then outlined details of a severance pay scheme that is in place in ROI which provides all non-returning councillors with significant financial recompense.*  
*Cllr Speers stated that he felt the relationship with LAMA was meaningful and of mutual benefit, he had previously been involved in meetings and would welcome the opportunity to attend future LAMA events.*
- A response was received on behalf John Kelpie to our request for SOLACE members to discuss uniformity across all councils in relation to the provision of resources, materials and benefits to councillors, it simply said "It was agreed that this was matter for each Council to consider".
- No reply has been received from Stephen Reid in relation to our request for an update of the LGTG review progress and a new date for a meeting following postponement of the last meeting, which was due to be held on 10/01/2019.  
*The Chairman explained that at a meeting last August we were advised that the review proposals would be shared with NAC and NILGA, however it appears that this is not the case. Following discussion it was agreed that a letter should be sent expressing our disappointment at being excluded in this process.*
- Following receipt of a letter from the CE of LCCC, Mr David Burns, requesting information on the achievements of the NAC we prepared an Information Sheet and sent this with our reply, the Chairman also made a presentation to the LCCC committee on this.  
*The Chairman advised that LCCC have supported NAC and also asked NILGA for the same information.*
- We wrote to Tracy Meharg, the Permanent Secretary of The DfC requesting progression of the Code of Conduct review. This letter and the reply were read out.  
NAC representatives met with NILGA on 8<sup>th</sup> March and 3<sup>rd</sup> April to discuss a joint approach in relation to progressing the review and the expectation for re-elected and newly elected councillors to sign acceptance of the code in its current form.  
Following cancellation of a joint meeting that was due to take place at NIPSO, also on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, a letter was sent by NILGA to all Council CE's outlining councillors concerns about signing the current Code of Conduct following the elections. A copy of the letter was passed around for members to read.

- Code of Conduct Review – continued  
*During the discussions that followed on this item, it was noted that the letter sent to all Council CE's by Derek McCallan was not seen or approved by the NAC prior to its circulation by NILGA.*  
*There were a number of suggestions and proposals made by members on how the NAC could make further representation on this matter to council chief executives, and through newly and re-elected councillors when they take up office following the elections.*  
*The debate concluded with the Chairman stating that a letter will be created and printed by the NAC voicing councillors concerns about having to sign acceptance of the Code of Conduct in its current form. The letter will be sent to all council chief executives, all current councillors and to a main councillor contact from each council to distribute it to the newly elected councillors. This letter should then be signed by councillors and handed in to their council at their first council meeting.*
- There has recently been correspondence from councils regarding a change in regulations for GDPR registrations meaning that councillors will not have to pay registration or renewal fees. However, the advice remains that you **do** need to register if you carry out work on behalf of constituents and/or have CCTV cameras at your business or home premises.  
*Some members said that they have already received renewal notices and many were unaware that they did not need to pay. It was agreed that details of the changes to GDPR registration requirements are to be circulated to all councillors.*
- The NAC AGM has been booked for Friday 4th October 2019 at the Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown.
- A letter of condolence was sent to the Chair of Mid Ulster Council from the NAC Members in relation to the St Patrick's Day tragedy.

That completes the Secretary's report.

6. AOB - None

7. Next Meeting Date – Wednesday 19 June 2019 at 11am, venue to be confirmed.

### DECISIONS TAKEN

- Circulate the LGiU presentation and any further details to all councillors when received from Dr Andy Johnston.
- Send a letter to Stephen Reid regarding the review of the LGTG, conveying our disappointment at being excluded in this process.
- A letter will be created and printed by the NAC regarding the Code of Conduct review, this will then be sent to all council chief executives, all current councillors and to a main councillor contact from each council to distribute it to the newly elected councillors. Councillors will be asked to sign the letter and hand it in to their council.
- Details of the changes to GDPR registration requirements and fee exemption are to be circulated to all councillors.