



## **About Us**

The National Association of Councillors Northern Ireland Region was set up over 25 years ago, after local councillors decided they needed a strong local body as well as belonging to the UK National Association of Councillors.

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

We aim 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.

We lobby local authorities, Ministers, government departments and other relevant bodies on issues that are of concern for councillors and we have made major gains in councillors' pay and conditions as a result of councillors acting collectively in their common interest.

## **What we do for Councillors**

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

We provide information on changes in *legislation, revised allowances, government consultations and other 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 our *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 by 6 councils, to date
- 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



## **Our Current Aims and Objectives**

*We are working to:*

- Represent councillors' interests and ensure they are taken into account by the relevant bodies
- Bring councillors' allowances, benefits and severance pay arrangements closer to those received by other public representatives such as MLA's and MP's
- Progress a review of the councillors' Code of Conduct as it is widely felt that in the current form it is not fit for purpose
- Ensure that councillors receive the necessary equipment and resources to carry out their role irrespective of which council they are with
- Participate in the review process of the Local Government Training Group so that councillors receive adequate and appropriate training

## **Other Activities**

*Over the past year, we have:*

- Responded to individual councillors' requests for assistance and given advice on matters of personal concern. When necessary we have made representation, in confidence on behalf of councillors, to council and government officials and other organisations, then reported the responses back
- Wrote to all political parties and had meetings with representatives from 3 of the parties to request support for councillor equality
- Had meetings with NILGA to discuss items of common interest
- Had a joint meeting with NILGA and the CE of SOLACE to request support for councillor equality across all councils
- Met with the Secretary of State's Special Advisor, Kris Hopkins to receive a briefing on BREXIT
- Met with cross border councillors as facilitated by the AILG and the LAMA to discuss items of common interest and attend their seminars
- Created a new award for long serving councillors and presented Award Certificates to 3 councillors
- Sponsored a category for councillors in the Northern Ireland Local Government Awards and provided a judging panel to examine the entries and decide upon a winner
- Provided sponsorship to Social Enterprise Northern Ireland
- Arranged presentations to members from NILGOSC the councillors pension providers; Friends of the Earth on Fossil Fuel Divestment, Advice NI on Welfare Reform and Belfast City Council on GDPR and Data collection requirements