

Title of Report:	Correspondence
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	6 May 2025
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)			
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership		
Outcome	Council operates as one effective and efficient corporate unit with a common purpose and culture		
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services		
Estimated Timescale for Completion			
Date to be Completed		N/A	
Budgetary Considerations			
Cost of Proposal		N/A	
Included in Current Year Estimates		N/A	
Capital/Revenue		N/A	
Code		N/A	
Staffing Costs		N/A	
Legal Considerations			
Input of Legal Services Required		YES/NO	
Legal Opinion Obtained		YES/NO	
Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

1.2 The following correspondence has been received:

2.0 Alison McCullough, Chief Executive, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, correspondence dated 24 March 2025 (copy attached)

2.1 At its March Council meeting, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council adopted the following motion, and asked that it be forwarded to all Northern Ireland Councils. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council look forward to receiving a response from this Council.

2.2 *As we are now living in a growingly diverse community - and the richness in which that brings to our workplaces, homes and communities - FODC believes that a diverse workplace is important for embedding anti-racism. As such, the Fermanagh and Omagh Council should show leadership by having a diverse and welcoming workforce.*

We therefore propose that FODC commits to;

- *conducting an annual review of its workforce demographics*
- *developing strategies to increase diversity across all levels of its employment*
- *comprehensively train all employees on diversity and inclusion, including areas such as unconscious bias and inclusive communication.*
- *apply outreach positive action to encourage candidates, from diverse backgrounds, for any available posts.*

3.0 Councillor Wesley Brown, Deputy Chair, Mid Ulster Council, correspondence dated 1 April 2025 (copy attached)

3.1 At its March meeting, Mid Ulster Council carried the following Motion and seek a response from this Council:

3.2 *This Council:*

- *Notes that under current Northern Ireland road traffic law, there is no legal requirement for other vehicles to stop when a school bus is picking up or dropping off pupils.*
- *Recognises that child safety is of paramount importance and that measures akin to the U.S. "stop-arm" system—requiring traffic to halt while*

schoolchildren board or alight—could significantly reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

- *Highlights the growing public concern and the desire of parents, educators, and local communities for stronger safeguarding measures at school bus stops, especially in rural areas where road layouts can pose additional risks.*
- *Believes that introducing legislation mandating vehicles to stop when a school bus is actively loading or unloading students would enhance road safety and offer additional protection to schoolchildren across Northern Ireland.*

3.3 This Council Resolves To:

- (i) *Call upon the Northern Ireland Assembly to develop and pass legislation requiring vehicles to stop for school buses that are picking up or dropping off pupils, in line with best practices observed in other jurisdictions.*
- (ii) *Write to all other local councils in Northern Ireland, urging them to support and pass similar motions, thereby demonstrating widespread local government backing for this measure.*
- (ii) *Write to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister of Education, highlighting the need for such legislation and requesting that they prioritise this issue within the Executive; and*
- (iii) *Undertake any additional measures within Mid-Ulster District's remit—such as awareness campaigns or pilot schemes—aimed at strengthening school transport safety until statutory changes are in effect.*

4.0 Kelly Cameron, Kelly Cameron, Secretary, Northern Ireland Housing Council (Email dated 24 April 2025 copy available)

- Minutes of the 515th Meeting of the NI Housing Council held Thursday 13 March 2025 attached

5.0 Michael Murdoch MBE, Chief Executive Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association, correspondence dated 28 April 2025 (copy attached)

Extract

5.1 Re: Council Members Representation to The Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, Northern Ireland

Traditionally, RFCA NI, has been provided with one Council Member Representative who would have a dual role as the Veterans Champion (VC).

However in June 2023 after consultation with the NI Veterans Support Office (as was) and the VCs, they agreed that the VC would benefit from having a Deputy. The funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has resulted in a significant rise in the VCs profile and veteran community engagement. The nomination of a Deputy VC could provide great outreach within the constituency and help the VC with the increased workload generated from within the veterans' community.

Although mandated to provide one representative, I would be very grateful if you could consider the additional request.

Below is a tabled request from RFCA NI.

Name of Committee/Body	Number of Councillors required	Annual nomination or full Council term	Any other specific requirements
RFCA NI	Veterans' Champion Deputy Veterans' Champion	Full Term	Ideally Councillors should come from different DEA(s)

6.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Council considers the correspondence.



Our Ref: Council/March 2025/20.4

Date: 24 March 2025

Email: [REDACTED]@fermanaghomagh.com

Mr David Jackson
Chief Executive
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council
66 Portstewart Road
COLERAINE
BT52 1EY

Dear Mr Jackson,

At the March Council meeting, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council adopted the following motion, and asked that it be forwarded to all Northern Ireland Councils.

As we are now living in a growingly diverse community - and the richness in which that brings to our workplaces, homes and communities - FODC believes that a diverse workplace is important for embedding anti-racism. As such, the Fermanagh and Omagh Council should show leadership by having a diverse and welcoming workforce.

We therefore propose that FODC commits to;

- conducting an annual review of its workforce demographics***
- developing strategies to increase diversity across all levels of its employment***
- comprehensively train all employees on diversity and inclusion, including areas such as unconscious bias and inclusive communication.***
- apply outreach positive action to encourage candidates, from diverse backgrounds, for any available posts.***

The Council looks forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

1 April 2025

Our ref: C058/25

By Email: david.jackson@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

Mr David Jackson
Chief Executive
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Dear Mr Jackson

Council at its March meeting carried the following motion:

This Council:

- Notes that under current Northern Ireland road traffic law, there is no legal requirement for other vehicles to stop when a school bus is picking up or dropping off pupils.
- Recognises that child safety is of paramount importance and that measures akin to the U.S. “stop-arm” system—requiring traffic to halt while schoolchildren board or alight—could significantly reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.
- Highlights the growing public concern and the desire of parents, educators, and local communities for stronger safeguarding measures at school bus stops, especially in rural areas where road layouts can pose additional risks.
- Believes that introducing legislation mandating vehicles to stop when a school bus is actively loading or unloading students would enhance road safety and offer additional protection to schoolchildren across Northern Ireland.

This Council Resolves To:

- (i) Call upon the Northern Ireland Assembly to develop and pass legislation requiring vehicles to stop for school buses that are picking up or dropping off pupils, in line with best practices observed in other jurisdictions.
- (ii) Write to all other local councils in Northern Ireland, urging them to support and pass similar motions, thereby demonstrating widespread local government backing for this measure.

- (iii) Write to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister of Education, highlighting the need for such legislation and requesting that they prioritise this issue within the Executive; and
- (iv) Undertake any additional measures within Mid-Ulster District's remit—such as awareness campaigns or pilot schemes—aimed at strengthening school transport safety until statutory changes are in effect.

I would appreciate your consideration in this important matter and would be grateful for a response.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of the councillor.

Councillor Wesley Brown
Deputy Chair



Minutes of the 515th Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council held on Thursday, 13th March 2025 at 10.30 am in the Housing Centre, 2 Adelaide Street, Belfast

Present:

Cllr Aaron Skinner
Cllr Mary O'Dowd

Alderman Keith Kerrigan
Ald Amanda Grehan

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council (In the Chair)
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
Derry City & Strabane District Council
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Virtual:

Ald Stephen McIlveen
Cllr Anne Marie Fitzgerald
Cllr Deirdre Varsani

Ards & North Down Borough Council
Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
Mid Ulster Borough Council

In Attendance:

Grainia Long
Jonny Blease
Adrian Blythe
Robert Clements
Kelly Cameron
Maria McLaughlin

CEO, NIHE
Head of Communications, NIHE
Quality Improvement Manager, NIHE
Head of Sustainable Development, NIHE
Secretary, Housing Council
Executive Assistant, NIHE

Apologies:

Cllr Mark Cooper

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

1.	Welcome The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting.	
2.	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations.	

3.	<p>Draft Minutes – Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday, 13th February 2025</p> <p>Ald Stephen McIlveen had requested information on a judicial review in relation to intimidation points, which had been omitted from the minutes.</p> <p>The minutes were proposed by Cllr Mary O'Dowd and seconded by Cllr Anne-Marie Fitzgerald</p> <p>Subject to the above amendment, the Minutes were approved.</p>	Secretary
4.	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>4.1 Invitation to the new Minister of Communities</p> <p>It was noted that an invitation had been extended to the Minister for Communities, Gordon Lyons to join Members at the May Meeting, a reply was awaited.</p> <p>4.2 Non attendance at meetings</p> <p>A response, from Belfast City Council regarding the non-attendance of Cllr McCusker and asking that appropriate action is taken, is still awaited</p> <p>Following discussion regarding the dismissive attitude and lack of communication from Belfast City Council, it was agreed that the Secretary would seek advice from the Department for Communities on the way forward on how to resolve this issue.</p> <p>4.3 Replacement for Newry, Mourne & Down Council's representative</p> <p>It was agreed that the Secretary should contact Newry, Mourne & Down Council again, to seek their nomination on the Housing Council, as it also influences the Housing Executive Board membership from the Housing Council.</p> <p>All other matters arising will be dealt with through the agenda.</p>	Secretary
5.	<p>HOUSING EXECUTIVE'S EMERGING ISSUES & STRATEGIC ITEMS</p> <p>Grainia Long gave an update on the Housing Executive's Emerging Issues under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January Monitoring Round, budget update and implications; • Overview of Business Plan for 2025/2026 and submission of budget figures; • Programme for Government; • Final quarter completion, major focus on new build programme and completion of the planned maintenance programme; • Fundamental Review of Allocations – Intimidation Points; 	Secretary

<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress re Homelessness provision, including NIAO report; and • NIPSO investigation. <p>Referring to NIPSO investigation, Cllr Grehan reiterated the shoddy workmanship of contractors in her area and asked if there is sufficient focus on inspections of works.</p> <p>Cllr Grehan also raised the issue of vulnerable people in temporary accommodation in hotels who are being sent to other areas with no support and she referred to a mother and child being moved from Lisburn to accommodation in Cookstown, as it was the only available temporary accommodation unit in Northern Ireland and the difficult transition for those vulnerable people.</p> <p>G Long referred to the increased level of demand for temporary accommodation, she added that the Housing Executive are very mindful that hotel placements are not ideal or practical for children and currently there are less than 2% placements in hotels are children and Officers are constantly monitoring these placements, to seek alternative arrangements. It was noted that the Housing Executive this year has increased the number of single lets by approximately 180 across all the Regions.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was recognised that certain cases within their areas could be used by Members as a way of illustration on highlighting issues, but individual cases should be sent directly to the Secretary to be triaged to the relevant Officers for a response. <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G Long undertook to provide the Housing Council with the steps the Housing Executive take to manage the transition out of hotel accommodation into temporary accommodation, and the obligations on landlords where we lease properties to ensure single lets are to an appropriate standard; • It was agreed that Members would be briefed, at a future meeting, on the progress involved in raising a repair, how the Housing Executive responds, and how they measure quality of repair works undertaken, including how they deal with complaints; • Presentation to be given to a future meeting on Disabled Adaptations; and • Presentation, at a future meeting, on Homeless for Young People. <p>In response to Cllr Varsani’s request for the Housing Executive to provide training on how to respond to the Pess in relation to housing issues, J Blease agreed to share factual briefings to Members, as and when they are issued, and when the Council’s Housing Investment Plans are being launched key points and public statements will be shared with Members.</p> <p>Housing Community Summit – 8th 9th September in Liverpool</p> <p>Cllr Skinner raised the forthcoming Housing Community Summit in Liverpool.</p> </div>	<div> <div>Members</div> <div>Secretary</div> <div>Secretary Secretary Secretary</div> </div>
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	<p>He reiterated that the Chair advised that he has written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive regarding their presence at the Summit this year as it is a platform to showcase the work that takes place in Northern Ireland especially in relation to Supporting People and Community Cohesion.</p> <p>G Long explained that the Housing Executive has engaged with the CIH organisers and have come back with some suggestions.</p>	
6.	<p>PRESENTATION ON THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE'S RETROFIT JOURNEY TO NET ZERO</p> <p>.</p> <p>Adrian Blythe and Robert Clements gave a presentation on the Housing Executive's Journey to Net Zero.</p> <p>Members noted that the Housing Executive's Corporate Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2027) is a framework for helping tackle the climate emergency, the strategy outlines the commitment to sustaining our environment for future generations and providing quality, affordable housing. The Housing Executive has a target of producing net zero carbon emissions by 2050.</p> <p>Ways in which the Housing Executive are delivering and tackling energy efficiency measures and renewable technology in homes over the next year are as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) – Ultra Low Energy New Build Pilot; • ERDF Energy Upgrades – Retrofit at Scale (1400 upgrades to non-traditional properties); • Cavity Wall Insulation (300 houses); and • Low Carbon Retrofit programme. <p>The Chair thanked Adrian Blythe & Robert Clements for a very informative presentation.</p>	
7.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p>	
7.1	<p>Written Ministerial Statement - Update on Intermediate Rent Funding Competition</p> <p>It was noted that the Department will be giving a presentation at the April Meeting on the progress, and next steps, of the Intermediate Rent Homes.</p>	Secretary
7.2	<p>Press Release - NIPSO proposes own initiative investigation into Housing Executive</p> <p>Press Release was noted.</p>	

7.3	Affordable Warmth Scheme query Noted.	
7.4	Figures in relation to Intimidation Cases Noted.	
7.5	Housing Waiting List Members requested a breakdown of the Housing Waiting list.	Secretary
8.	Date of Next Meeting The next meeting would be held on Thursday 10 th April 2025 at 10.30 am in Lisburn Civic Centre.	

Meeting ended 12.40 pm.



Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association
for Northern Ireland
25 Windsor Park
Belfast
BT9 6FR

T: 02895 219818
E: ni-info@rfca.mod.uk
Web: reservesandcadetsni.org.uk

28th April 2025

Mr David Jackson
Chief Executive
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
Coleraine
BT52 1EY

Dear David,

COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENTATION TO THE RESERVE FORCES AND CADETS ASSOCIATION, NORTHERN IRELAND

Traditionally, RFCA NI, has been provided with one Council Member Representative who would have a dual role as the Veterans Champion (VC). However in June 2023 after consultation with the NI Veterans Support Office (as was) and the VCs, they agreed that the VC would benefit from having a Deputy. The funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has resulted in a significant rise in the VCs profile and veteran community engagement. The nomination of a Deputy VC could provide great outreach within the constituency and help the VC with the increased workload generated from within the veterans' community.

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	Deputy Veterans' Champion		

Yours sincerely,

Mike

Michael Murdoch MBE
Chief Executive