



Present

Members: Alderman Boyle, Councillor Archibald, Mairs, McQuillan, McShane, Peacock

**Officers: Amanda Hamilton, Democratic and Central Services Manager
Elaine McConaghie, Policy Officer
Adele McCloskey, Community Development Officer
Joanne Keen, Committee and Member Services Officer**

Agenda No.	Item	ACTION
1.	Apologies	
	Apologies were recorded for Councillor Chivers.	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	There were no Declarations of Interest.	
3.	Notes of Meeting held 27 October 2025	
	DCSM provided an update of actions taken since the last meeting. DCSM advised that the PR team felt that promoting the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls campaign on International Men's Day would not be appropriate as it is a positive day for men. Councillor McQuillan stated he was content with this.	

Agenda No.	Item	ACTION
4.	Mayor – Community/ Voluntary sector shadowing opportunities	
	<p>DCSM stated that the Mayor's Office has confirmed the week commencing Monday 2 March 2026 as a possible opportunity for students shadowing the Mayor with the Council Meeting being held on 3 March 2026. DCSM advised that the Mayor had suggested 1 to 2 pupils from St Killan's College, Cross and Passion and Ballycastle High School from key stage 4 and 5 could be invited to shadow him.</p> <p>Councillor Peacock stated that St Killan's is located within Mid and East Antrim Council area and acknowledged that children from the Glens area would go to this school, but it may not be appropriate to offer this opportunity to a school in another Council area.</p> <p>Councillor McShane stated that it is timely for Cross and Passion College before they move to the shared campus and stated she understood what Councillor Peacock was saying about St Killan's College being in a different Council area.</p> <p>AGREED – to contact Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School to arrange for 1 to 2 female students from key stage 4 and 5 to shadow the Mayor the week commencing Monday 2 March 2026 with the Full Council Meeting on the 3 March 2026 being a good opportunity for students to attend.</p>	DCSM
5.	Update on Boost Mentoring	
	<p>DCSM stated that the Boost mentoring Scheme was available to Council Officers in 2023/24 and the programme has now ended. DCSM stated that a coaching programme, from an external provider, for Heads of Service is being considered by OD/HR. There was some discussion around whether a similar programme might exist in NILGA for Elected Members.</p>	

Agenda No.	Item	ACTION
	AGREED - that the DCSM will liaise with NILGA regarding a potential coaching programme for Elected Members.	DCSM
6.	Recruitment Information	
6.1	Equal Opportunities Policy	
	<p>DCSM advised Working Group Members of the vacancies that currently exist within the Council and shared her screen to show the Equal Opportunities policy.</p> <p>In response to questions DCSM advised that the policy was screened in 2016 and will be reviewed.</p> <p>Discussion ensued about encouraging applications from women particularly for roles that are traditionally seen as male roles. It was considered appropriate to have a statement relating to this in the application pack.</p> <p>AGREED – to provide feedback from this discussion to OD/HR</p>	DCSM
7.	Bystander Training	
	<p>DCSM outlined the purpose of this training and advised the training was offered to all employees – the training session in Limavady has taken place and the session in Cloonavin is fully booked.</p> <p>Community Development Officer advised there was good uptake with 17 members of staff having been enrolled on the training sessions. Community Development Officer advised that</p>	

Agenda No.	Item	ACTION
	<p>further training could be organised for Senior Leadership and Elected Members if there was a desire for it.</p> <p>Discussion ensued about offering the training to Senior Officers and Elected Members and the best way to proceed in providing the training.</p> <p>AGREED – that the DCSM will enquire if the training can be provided to Senior Officers and Elected Members and progress obtaining numbers of Elected Members who might be interested.</p>	DCSM
8.	<p>Empowering Women Programme (NILGA)</p> <p>DSCM advised Working Group Members that if there are more than 5 people interested in the Programme from Council, this it can be brought to NILGA and if there are a minimum of 15 people interested in total, then NILGA would move to make provision for the programme to run next year.</p> <p>Alderman Boyle, Councillor Mairs and Councillor Peacock stated they would be interested in attending the Programme.</p> <p>Councillor Peacock stated that evenings and weekends would suit best to attend the training due to other commitments during the day. Councillor Peacock requested that this is also put on the Agenda for the group leads meeting with the Chief Executive.</p> <p>AGREED – DCSM will issue an email through Member Services to gauge interest in the Empowering Women Programme and if there are more than 5 Members interested it will be progressed to NILGA.</p>	DCSM

Agenda No.	Item	ACTION
	DCSM provided information regarding the Leadership Programme and advised NILGA would confirm who is enrolled on the Programme by the end of the first week in December.	
9.	International Women's Day, 8th March, 2026	
	<p>DCSM advised there are no events for International Women's Day currently organised by Council. DCSM shared the Reclaim the Agenda website to show planned events in Belfast which may be of interest to Members. "Reclaim the Agenda" is a coalition of feminist, youth, LGBTQ+ & community organisations. It exists to connect and mobilise women to promote feminist activism through education, campaigning and celebration.</p> <p>Community Development Officer advised that The Executive Office have requested that a showcasing event is organised for groups that have received funding and this is due to happen close to the time of International Women's Day.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding Council organising its own event for International Women's Day and having a meeting to brainstorm ideas.</p> <p>AGREED – to hold a Women's Working Group meeting to brainstorm ideas for International Women's Day</p>	
10.	SistersIN	
	DCSM advised this is a Leadership Programme organised by The Executive Office.	

Agenda No.	Item	ACTION
	<p>Councillor Peacock stated this is a fantastic programme for Council to get involved with and consideration should be given to what opportunities Council could offer.</p> <p>AGREED – DCSM will seek further information and report back to the Women's Working Group.</p>	DCSM
11.	Any Other Relevant Business	
	Alderman Boyle stated it was great to see Councillor McQuillan in attendance.	
12.	Date of next meeting	
	Wednesday 7 January 2026 at 6pm.	

This being all the business the meeting closed at 4:52pm