



Title of Report:	Local Government Elections 2027
Committee Report Submitted To:	Corporate Policy and Resources
Date of Meeting:	28 April 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee YES/NO	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Leader and Champion
Outcome	Provide Civic Leadership
Lead Officer	Chief Executive – Deputy Returning Officer Director Of Corporate Services – Assistant Deputy Returning Officer

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	TBC
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	Revenue – Election Reserve
Code	
Staffing Costs	Included

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	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:
	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:

Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	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 this Report is to provide Members with an update for next year's Local Government Elections.

2.0 **Background**

2.1 The date for the Local Government Elections is set in statute as the first Thursday in May every four years.

2.2 The Assembly Elections are held the first Thursday in May every five years.

2.3 Members will already be aware that the Secretary of State has announced that there will be combined Elections for both the Local Government and Assembly Elections with Polling Day taking place on Thursday 06 May 2027.

3.0 **Election Steering/Working Groups**

The Electoral Office NI has established a Local Council Combined Elections 2027 Steering Group along with various Working Groups on which Council is represented.

3.0 **Further Information**

3.1 NILGA's presentation, attached at Appendix A, provides further details. Please note, this presentation has been previously circulated but is included again for information.

4.0 **Finance**

Assembly Elections are paid for by the UK Government, whereas Local Government Elections are paid for by Local Councils.

The estimated costs for the 2027 LG Elections are currently being reviewed and further details will be brought back to Council.

5.0 Recommendation

Members are asked to note the information provided above and be advised that Officers will continue to work in preparation for the Local Government Elections 2027 and also continue to represent Council on the Electoral Office NI's Steering/Working Groups.



2027 Joint Elections (Assembly & Local Council)

NILGA Presentation

13 February 2026

Parliamentary Question

23 June 2025 – Secretary of State NI

“The date for local government elections is set in statute as the first Thursday in May every 4 years, for the Assembly elections as the first Thursday in May every 5 years. The people of NI expect to go to the polls on 6 May 2027 & the Government has no intention of changing that.”

Planning / Scale of the task

Date / Volumes

- **Assembly & Council elections - Thursday 6 May 2027**
- **1.45m** poll cards (1 per elector)
- **2.9m** ballot papers (1 Council/1 Assembly)
- **600 Poll Places / 3,000 Stations / c1,100+** candidates
- **8,000** staff: 5,000 Poll & 3,000 Count

Combined elections - Joint Planning

- Highly complex project - **detailed operational plan Summer 2026**
- Joint planning between Councils & Electoral Office well underway
- Also working with Electoral Commission - statutory responsibility for communication

Joint Election

Double Geography

Table 1: Split of Local Councils by District Electoral Area

Council	Number of DEAs	Number of Wards
Antrim & Newtownabbey	7	40
Ards & North Down	7	40
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	7	42
Belfast	10	60
Causeway Coast & Glens	7	40
Derry City & Strabane	7	40
Fermanagh & Omagh	7	40
Lisburn & Castlereagh	7	40
Mid & East Antrim	7	40
Mid Ulster	7	40
Newry, Mourne & Down	7	40
Total	80	462

Thus the 80 District Electoral Areas are made up from 462 electoral wards (as whole units) which are also coterminous with the Councils.

Table 2: Split of Assembly Areas by Ward

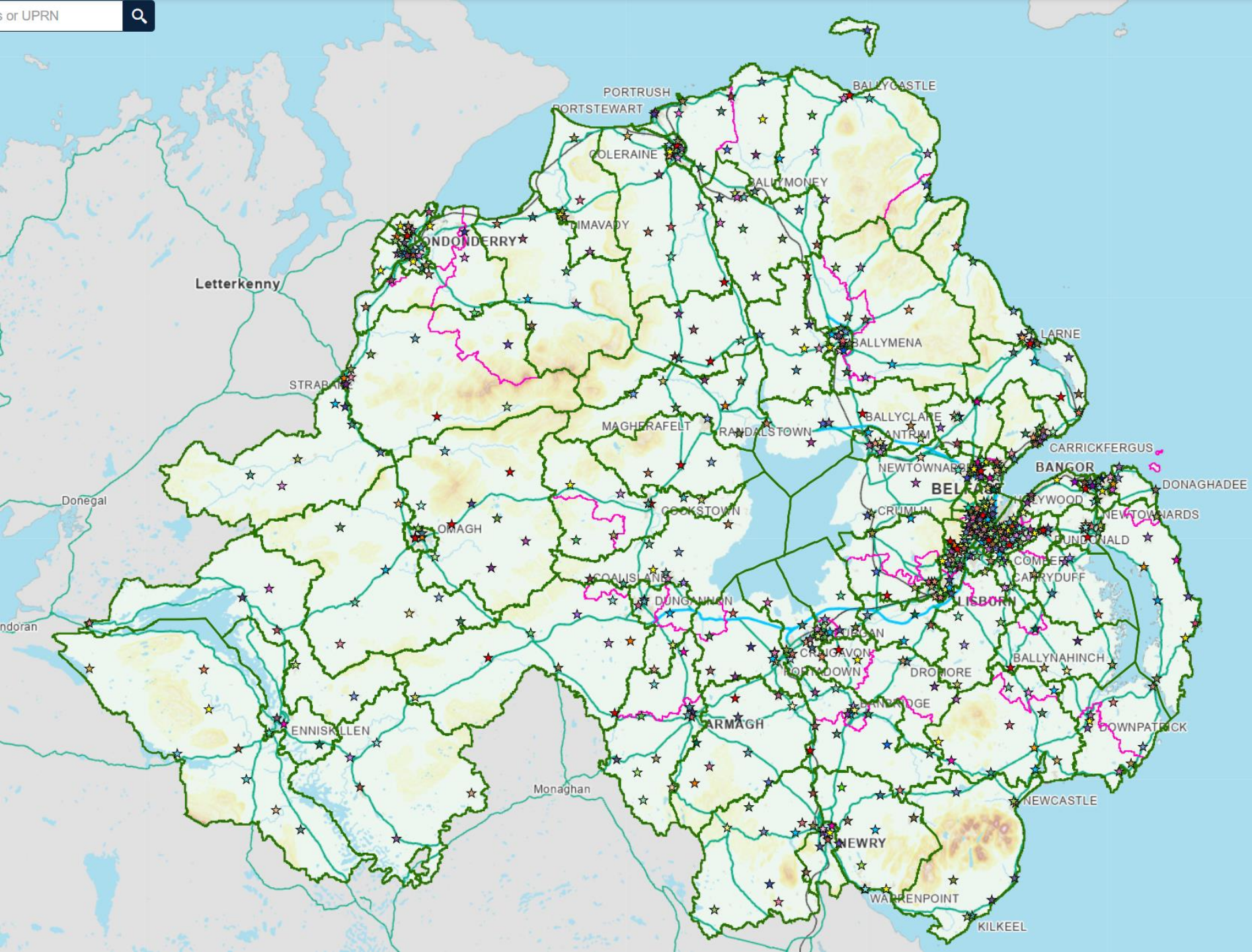
Assembly Area	Number of DEAs (includes split DEAS)	Number of “Wards” (includes split wards)
Belfast East	4	21
Belfast North	5	24
Belfast South & Mid Down	7	22
Belfast West	4	19
East Antrim	8	28
East Londonderry	7	29
Foyle	5	25
Fermanagh South Tyrone (FST)	7	34
Lagan Valley	7	29
Mid Ulster	8	31
Newry & Armagh	4	23
North Antrim	6	30
North Down	6	25
South Antrim	7	28
South Down	6	26
Strangford	6	26
Upper Bann	5	23
West Tyrone	7	31
Grand Total	109	474

53 DEAs wholly contained in 1 Assembly Area
25 DEAs split across 2 Assembly Areas, 2 DEAs split across 3 Assembly Areas
Thus 109 DEA-Assembly Area “building blocks”

Table 2: Showing How the 80 District Electoral Areas are split across the 18 Assembly Areas into the 109 Areas on the ground

Name as (DEA-Assembly Area)

1	(AIRPORT-South Antrim)	39	(COOKSTOWN-West Tyrone)	77	(LISNASHARRAGH-Belfast South & Mid Down)
2	(ANTRIM-South Antrim)	40	(COURT-Belfast North)	78	(LURGAN-Lagan Valley)
3	(ARDS PENINSULA-North Down)	41	(COURT-Belfast West)	79	(LURGAN-Upper Bann)
4	(ARDS PENINSULA-Strangford)	42	(CRAIGAVON-Upper Bann)	80	(MACEDON-Belfast North)
5	(ARMAGH-FST)	43	(CROTLIEVE-South Down)	81	(MACEDON-East Antrim)
6	(ARMAGH-Newry & Armagh)	44	(CUSHER-Newry & Armagh)	82	(MAGHERAFELT-Mid Ulster)
7	(BALLYARNETT-Foyle)	45	(DERG-West Tyrone)	83	(MID TYRONE-West Tyrone)
8	(BALLYCLARE-South Antrim)	46	(DOWNPATRICK-South Down)	84	(MOYOLA-Mid Ulster)
9	(BALLYMENA-North Antrim)	47	(DOWNPATRICK-Strangford)	85	(NEWRY-Newry & Armagh)
10	(BALLYMONEY-North Antrim)	48	(DOWNSHIRE EAST-Belfast South & Mid Down)	86	(NEWTOWNARDS-Strangford)
11	(BALMORAL-Belfast South & Mid Down)	49	(DOWNSHIRE EAST-Lagan Valley)	87	(OLDPARK-Belfast North)
12	(BANBRIDGE-South Down)	50	(DOWNSHIRE WEST-Lagan Valley)	88	(OMAGH-West Tyrone)
13	(BANBRIDGE-Upper Bann)	51	(DUNGANNON-FST)	89	(ORMISTON-Belfast East)
14	(BANGOR CENTRAL-North Down)	52	(DUNGANNON-Mid Ulster)	90	(ORMISTON-North Down)
15	(BANGOR EAST AND DONAGHADEE-North Down)	53	(DUNSILLY-South Antrim)	91	(PORTADOWN-Mid Ulster)
16	(BANGOR WEST-North Down)	54	(ENNISKILLEN-FST)	92	(PORTADOWN-Upper Bann)
17	(BANN-East Londonderry)	55	(ERNE EAST-FST)	93	(ROWALLANE-Belfast South & Mid Down)
18	(BANNSIDE-North Antrim)	56	(ERNE NORTH-FST)	94	(ROWALLANE-Strangford)
19	(BENBRADAGH-East Londonderry)	57	(ERNE WEST-FST)	95	(SLIEVE CROOB-South Down)
20	(BLACK MOUNTAIN-Belfast West)	58	(FAUGHAN-East Londonderry)	96	(SLIEVE CROOB-Strangford)
21	(BOTANIC-Belfast South & Mid Down)	59	(FAUGHAN-Foyle)	97	(SLIEVE GULLION-Newry & Armagh)
22	(BRAID-East Antrim)	60	(FAUGHAN-West Tyrone)	98	(SPERRIN-East Londonderry)
23	(BRAID-North Antrim)	61	(FOYLESIDE-Foyle)	99	(SPERRIN-West Tyrone)
24	(CARNTOGHER-Mid Ulster)	62	(GLENGORMLEY URBAN-Belfast North)	100	(THE GLENS-East Antrim)
25	(CARRICK CASTLE-East Antrim)	63	(GLENGORMLEY URBAN-South Antrim)	101	(THE GLENS-North Antrim)
26	(CASTLE-Belfast North)	64	(HOLYWOOD AND CLANDEBOYE-North Down)	102	(THE MOOR-Foyle)
27	(CASTLEREAGH EAST-Belfast East)	65	(KILLULTAGH-Lagan Valley)	103	(THE MOURNES-South Down)
28	(CASTLEREAGH EAST-Belfast South & Mid Down)	66	(KILLULTAGH-South Antrim)	104	(THREE MILE WATER-East Antrim)
29	(CASTLEREAGH SOUTH-Belfast South & Mid Down)	67	(KNOCKAGH-East Antrim)	105	(THREE MILE WATER-South Antrim)
30	(CAUSEWAY-East Londonderry)	68	(LAGAN RIVER-Lagan Valley)	106	(TITANIC-Belfast East)
31	(CAUSEWAY-North Antrim)	69	(LAGAN RIVER-South Down)	107	(TORRENT-Mid Ulster)
32	(CLOGHER VALLEY-FST)	70	(LAGAN RIVER-Upper Bann)	108	(WATERSIDE-Foyle)
33	(CLOGHER VALLEY-Mid Ulster)	71	(LARNE LOUGH-East Antrim)	109	(WEST TYRONE-West Tyrone)
34	(COAST ROAD-East Antrim)	72	(LIMAVADY-East Londonderry)		
35	(COLERAINE-East Londonderry)	73	(LISBURN NORTH-Belfast West)		Areas in white - DEA contained in Assembly Areas
36	(COLLIN-Belfast West)	74	(LISBURN NORTH-Lagan Valley)		Areas in yellow - DEA split across 2 Assembly Areas
37	(COMBER-Strangford)	75	(LISBURN SOUTH-Lagan Valley)		Areas in grey - DEA split across 2 Assembly Areas
38	(COOKSTOWN-Mid Ulster)	76	(LISNASHARRAGH-Belfast East)		Areas in red - DEA split across 3 Assembly Areas



1409 Ballot Boxes

605 premises

Need to align to 109 areas

Joint Election

Working Basis

Polling Day

- Each elector receives **one poll card**
- Each elector attends **one polling station**
- Electors are marked off **one register**
- At the polling station, electors receive **two ballot papers**
- Both completed ballots are placed into **one ballot box**

Single Ballot Box in “One-Area” Poll

- Easier for elector (2 ballots in 1 box)
- **Polling Place/Station** configuration (all ballots from that Place are for “1 DEA-Constituency” Area)
- No split Polling Places & 1 Ballot Box easier logistically

Count

- **Joint Ballot Boxes from both elections - jointly verified - Friday 7 May 2027**
- **At least 2 Assembly Count Centres: Friday 7 AND Saturday 8**
- **Sunday 9 May (Ballot Boxes to Council counts)**
- **Local Council counts - Monday 10 AND Tuesday 11**

Legislative Underpinning

Joint Election Regulations

- NIO will bring forward Regulations to support delivery
- Approach replicates 2011, when Assembly & Local Council elections were last held on same day
- “Standard” Combined Election rules
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/1/schedule/8>
- Allows (1 Register in Polling Stations & 1 Poll Card)

New Electoral legislation

- UK Government also amending wider electoral laws
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/representation-of-the-people-bill-policy-summaries>
- **Votes @ 16** – first implementation UK General Election
- Reform of the Northern Ireland Canvass



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NILGA Presentation

13 February 2026