



Title of Report:	Correspondence
Committee Report Submitted To:	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	26 May 2026
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	
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Budgetary Considerations

Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

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.

2.0 Stephen Magee, Committee for Finance, dated 30 April 2026 (copy attached)

2.1 Extract Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Bill

The NI Assembly Committee for Finance had previously sought your views on the Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Bill.

The Bill was introduced by the Finance Minister, John O'Dowd MLA, on 25th March 2025. The purpose of the Bill is to amend the law relating to the manner of notification of deaths and still-births and the manner of giving particulars relating to them. It will also provide a legislative basis for the introduction of a baby loss scheme and will address differences in registration processes for births and stillbirths between some same-sex female couples and opposite-sex couples.

The Department of Finance has provided more details to the Committee for Finance on the process of certificate production in general and the fields that may be included on the printed certificate in particular. Attached is a briefing note detailing the background to the design options for the proposed baby loss certificates, the production process and includes copies of the certificate templates intended for use. The Committee agreed to share this information [attached] with your organisation.

3.0 Northern Ireland Local Government Association, dated 30 April 2026
(copy attached)

3.1 Extract

As we look ahead in 2026, we do so in the context of a sector that has continued to evolve rapidly. The experience of 2025 in particular reinforced the scale of the pressures facing local government and the importance of a strong collective voice for councils.

Councils continue to navigate sustained financial and inflationary pressures, increasing demand for essential services, workforce recruitment and retention challenges, and heightened expectations around climate resilience, community planning and transformation. Alongside this, the policy environment continues to shift, with the need for timely engagement, clear guidance and coordinated delivery across partners.

In response, NILGA focused on turning member priorities into practical support and influence. We strengthened collective advocacy on sectoral sustainability and funding; convened councils and partners to support joined-up delivery; provided timely policy briefings and consultation responses to ensure local government views were reflected in policy design and decision-making; expanded member development and leadership support; and continued workforce and communications support to help councils attract, retain and develop the talent needed to deliver services.

I am pleased to provide our 2025/2026 NILGA Impact Report, setting out the difference we are making for councils through our work on sectoral sustainability, policy and future development.

To enable the continuation of this work, the annual core subscription for your council for 26/27 is £57,164 (plus VAT), an invoice is attached. Any increases are due entirely to the same unavoidable inflationary and staffing costs facing councils and we have made every effort to keep your subscription as low as possible.

On behalf of NILGA, I want to thank the NILGA Members from your council and your Officers that so willingly give of their time in supporting our work.

4.0 Cllr Jackson Minford, Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough, dated 18th May 2026 (copy attached)

4.1 Extract

Annual Battle of the Somme Remembrance Parade and Service Knockagh War Memorial, Carrickfergus – Sunday 28th June 2026

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and the Knockagh Monument Joint Committee invite the Mayor, Alderman and Councillors to attend the Annual Battle of the Somme Remembrance Parade and Service to be held at the Knockagh War Memorial on Sunday 28th June 2026. The parade will form up at the Knockagh War memorial at 10.40 am, to be followed by a Service at 11.00 am.

For registration of attendance please contact Democratic Services.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee note the correspondence.

Baby Loss Scheme - Certificate Templates

Background

Following the baby loss certificate scheme public consultation exercise, responses were carefully reviewed to understand how people would like their certificate to look and what it should contain.

The consultation showed that most respondents wanted a certificate that reflects the importance and significance of their loss, and which is similar in style to existing life event certificates. This preference was expressed even though the certificate will not have any legal status. Many consultees felt that a familiar and formal format would help recognise their baby and acknowledge their loss with dignity.

Production and contents

Baby loss certificates will be produced electronically using the existing General Register Office (GRO) IT system. Incorporating the new certificates within existing systems has enabled us to bring forward the new scheme at pace – leveraging earlier investments in data security and the case management systems for certificate production.

Alongside these technical aspects of the scheme, GRO has put in place new business processes to support the new Baby Loss Certificate Scheme. This has involved recruiting new staff to manage an expected peak in demand at the opening of the scheme and ensuring separation between Baby Loss and birth certificate production.

The development of this functionality and the support arrangements for the new Scheme are now close to completion. Following feedback from the consultation, the overall design has been aligned with other life event certificates to ensure a consistent and professional standard.

The information included on the certificate has been shaped directly by feedback from the consultation. For example, respondents told us how important it was for the date of delivery to be included alongside the date of loss, and this has been incorporated into the template.

The certificate will include the following fields (see example template available at Annex A):

1. Name of baby
2. Sex
3. Date of loss
Date of delivery

4. Place of loss
5. Name and surname of parent 1
6. Name and surname of parent 2
7. Certificate reference
8. Date of issue

The information provided by applicants at the point of application will be used to populate the certificate. Where someone does not have, or does not wish to include, certain details, those fields will be left blank or marked with three dashes. This approach is consistent with how other life events are handled, including births, deaths, marriages and stillbirths, and helps ensure the certificate is representative of individual circumstances.

50% of respondents to the public consultation indicated a preference for the inclusion of blank fields or those marked with dashes as opposed to empty spaces. Most respondents indicated a desire for these certificates to have the official look and feel of other official life event certificates. Including blank or fields marked with dashes would be consistent with those other certificates and with other Baby Loss Certificate schemes in England and Scotland.

While we recognise that some parents may wish for certain fields to be entirely removed from their certificate, creating fully bespoke certificates for each individual circumstance would create considerable practical difficulties and is not feasible within the current certificate production system. Bespoke Baby Loss certificates would also lose their consistency with other life event certificates – undermining key feedback from the consultation – and their brevity (perhaps including a very small number of fields) may raise other concerns for parents. Certificates of this kind would also take longer to produce, likely using more bespoke systems which would not benefit from the same robust processes as existing certificates and require considerable further resources to ensure certificate quality.

Summary

The development of the baby loss certificate template has been guided by meaningful engagement with those who have experienced loss, with a clear emphasis on recognition, dignity and compassion.

The certificate design reflects what consultees told us mattered most to them, while remaining consistent with established formats. At the same time, the scheme has been developed within practical constraints, using existing systems to ensure it can be delivered reliably and at scale.

While it is recognised that this approach may not meet every individual preference, it seeks to balance sensitivity to personal circumstances with the need to deliver a timely, sustainable and operationally viable service.

Sample Certificate Templates

These attached sample certificates have been printed on official certificate paper, the same as used for all official life event certificates produced by the General Register Office. As such the security measures embedded in the paper, including the distinct watermark and foils, are visible on the scanned versions attached.



CERTIFICATE OF BABY LOSS



TEASTAS CAILLTEANAIS LINBH

CP00000001

1. Name of Baby/Ainm Linbh: Joseph John James Bloggs	2. Sex/Gnéas: Male
3. Date of Loss/Dáta an Chailiteanais: 1st May 2025 Date of Delivery/Dáta na Breithe: —	4. Place of Loss/Láthair an Chailiteanais: Royal Maternity Hospital, Belfast
5. Name & Surname of Parent 1: Ainm & Sioinne Tuismitheoir 1: Jane Anne Bloggs	6. Name & Surname of Parent 2: Ainm & Sioinne Tuismitheoir 2: Joseph John Bloggs
7. Certificate Reference/Tagairt an Teastais: CS10000001	8. Date of Issue/Dáta Eisiúna: 22nd April 2026

Information: This certificate is produced following a self declaration by the parent. This certificate cannot be used as evidence of identity and does not give any entitlement to services or benefits. © Crown copyright.

Eolas: Tá an teastas seo á tháirgeadh i ndiaidh féindhearbhú ón tuismitheoir. Ní féidir an deimhniú seo a úsáid mar fhianaise ar chéannacht agus ní thugann sé aon teideal do sheirbhísí ná do shochair. © Cóipcheart na Corónach.



TEASTAS CAILLTEANAIS LINBH



CP00000001

1. Ainm Linbh: Joseph John James Bloggs	2. Gnéis: Male
3. Dáta an Chaillteanais: 1st May 2025 Dáta na Breithe: —	4. Láthair an Chaillteanais: Royal Maternity Hospital
5. Ainm & Sloinne Tuismitheoir 1: Jane Anne Bloggs	6. Ainm & Sloinne Tuismitheoir 2: Joseph John Bloggs
7. Tagairt an Teastais: CS10000001	8. Dáta Eisiúna: 22nd April 2026

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CP00000001

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3. Date of Loss: 1st May 2025 Date of Delivery: --	4. Place of Loss: Royal Maternity Hospital, Belfast
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Mr David Jackson
Chief Executive
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
COLERAINE
BT52 1EY

30th April 2026

Dear David,

As we look ahead in 2026, we do so in the context of a sector that has continued to evolve rapidly. The experience of 2025 in particular reinforced the scale of the pressures facing local government and the importance of a strong collective voice for councils.

Councils continue to navigate sustained financial and inflationary pressures, increasing demand for essential services, workforce recruitment and retention challenges, and heightened expectations around climate resilience, community planning and transformation. Alongside this, the policy environment continues to shift, with the need for timely engagement, clear guidance and coordinated delivery across partners.

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On behalf of NILGA, I want to thank the NILGA Members from your council and your Officers that so willingly give of their time in supporting our work.

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB

Tel: 028 9079 8972 email: office@nilga.org web: www.nilga.org twitter: @NI_LGA

I look forward to continuing our close relationship with your council and please let me know if there is anything that I can do to assist you, your members or your wider corporate team.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Alison Allen.

Alison Allen
Chief Executive

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB

Tel: 028 9079 8972 email: office@nilga.org web: www.nilga.org twitter: @NI_LGA

NILGA Impact Review 2025-26

Impact on Sectoral Sustainability

NILGA secures investment for local government sector

- NILGA invested £50,000 in Change Academy as a development opportunity for 10 local government employees, proportionally matched by participating councils
- NILGA's partnership with AILG secured Shared Island Funding for cross-border EVAWG event (€20,000)
- NILGA invested £6,600 in partnership with LGA to use recruitment campaign assets, representing a saving for councils of approximately £40,000
- NILGA invested £15,000 in partnership with LGIU, representing a council saving of £20,000

NILGA identifies transformation & improvement ideas for local government sector

- New approach to planning improvement & engagement agreed with DfI, task & finish group agreed with 10 councils nominating members
- Transformation and improvement opportunities developed with DfE in 2025, with potential for future rollout

The achievements of local government are promoted

- NILGA Communications Strategy & Action Plan agreed
- Dedicated councillor WhatsApp group established to support councillor engagement
- 12 editions of NILGA News & regular media articles produced to promote NILGA and councils
 - NILGA News: an increase from 497 sign-ups to 513 in the year, and averaging almost 50% engagement per edition across the year
 - 24 NILGA press releases issued covering local government events, training, partnership engagements, Civility in public life and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls.
 - NILGA featured in over 20 Media articles (these include but are not exclusive to: Local Government Awards, LG Reform +10, AILG Partnership, Digital Guide, PwC Local Government Change Academy, Civility in Public Life, LG Staff Royal Reception, Ulster in Bloom and Britain in Bloom)
 - Social media: NILGA gained over 300 LinkedIn followers and over 46,000 impressions in the past year, and X followers continue to grow with almost 5,000 now engaging with NILGA.
- Spokespersons identified on transformation & rural affairs
- Collaboration with LGIU resulted in readership growth of LGIU NI council newsletter and profiling of member councils & projects in UK & Ireland editions of LGIU newsletters, along with participation on global-local panels

Impact on Policy

Local government is moving away from being merely a consultee towards being a co-design partner with central government in all relevant policy areas

- Continuing improvements in engagement of NILGA in co-design of key policy initiatives. Recent engagement with central government departments and Committees including on draft Anti Poverty Strategy, draft Dilapidation Bill, draft Rethinking our Resources; Circular Economy and Waste Management Strategy, draft Roads Maintenance Strategy.

Regional cooperation contributes to policy planning & design

- 8 Strategic Policy Network meetings in 2025 /26.
- Agreement to establish Ministerial-led forum for Elected Members on Planning
- New policy relationship formed with British Irish Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (influential in shaping both regional and national policy), commencing with giving evidence on rural housing
- 11 local government positions developed by NILGA on Fuel Poverty, Environmental governance in NI, Developer Contributions to Wastewater infrastructure, Credit Union Modernisation and Reform, Anti Poverty Strategy, Climate Action Plan, Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt Services, Definition of Social Enterprise, Roads Maintenance Strategy, Small Business Rates Relief, Rethinking our Resources Waste Management Strategy.
- 5 local government positions developed jointly with Solace NI on draft Dilapidation Bill, Sale and Supply of Puppies and Kittens, Economic Growth in Northern Ireland; NICCAP 3 and Climate Action Plan.
- Joint working between DfI and NILGA with Councils to develop a new regional Planning Improvement Programme.
- All Party Group on Local Government formed.
- 1 meeting of UK Forum of LGAs agreed position statement on Civility in Public Life.
- 1 meeting of NILGA/AILG, EAWWG statement agreed.
- Bi-annual meetings with UFU and NIAPA.

NILGA represents the voice of local government

- Over 4,000 hours of added value provided by NILGA members & staff in representing the interests of councils, promoting the work of NILGA & councils and working with other LGAs / partners; international work.
- Member representations to DFC on draft Anti Poverty Strategy
- Member representations to DoF on Local Growth Fund
- Member representations to DAERA on draft Dilapidation Bill
- Member representations to DFI on draft Roads Maintenance Strategy
- Member representation to NI Affairs Committee on Economic Growth in NI
- Member representation to British-Irish Parliamentary Partnership Assembly on rural housing
- Member representation to EU Committee of the Regions – UK Contact Group
- Member representation on the Employers Side of the National Joint Council, representing NI views on pay and conditions of service at national level
- Member representation on the National Association of Regional Employers, sharing best practice between regions
- Member representation at COSLA, WLGA and LGA conferences
- Member representation at UKAPA conference, focusing on the role of local government & opportunities / challenges
- Member representation on Jo Cox Civility Commission round table
- Member representation at UK Embassy in Bucharest on accessibility & inclusion; and at the Mallorcan conference on the role of women in peace
- NILGA officers representing sector at Covid Inquiry; and a range of UK & EU forums for local government associations.

Impact on future development

Councillors value learning & development opportunities offered by NILGA

- 2 meetings of Elected Member Development Network held, focusing on Regional Programme delivery 2025/26, Association of Democratic Services (ADSO), content development for Council Learning Management Systems and Planning Improvement capacity building.
- Regional Programme agreed, workshops delivered with average of 95% rating as excellent or good. All sessions now available to watch on demand at a time that suits.
 - *Managing Misinformation, 17 attended*
 - *Audit Committee, 6 attended*
 - *The Digital Councillor, 14 attended*
 - *Civil Contingencies - 10 attended*
 - *Debating Skills - 7 attended*
- 10 councillors participating on NILGA Leadership Programme 2026
- NILGA awarded Charter Plus awarded to Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and Charter awarded to Mid Ulster District Council
- NILGA continues to lead coordination and delivery of the Councillor Development Charter and Charter Plus accreditation.
- Ongoing partnership with OpenLearn established to provide online learning hub for councillors.

The local government sector is informed

- 2 Insights Exchange Events delivered on Social Value & Councillor Safety
- Capacity building through briefings, learning events and study visits including pay negotiations; UK & Ireland LGA liaison, European Week of Regions & Cities, UFU/NIAPA, visit.

NILGA is a valued partner and stakeholder

- NILGA signed formal Memorandum of Collaboration with AILG, agreed 3 year action plan & established steering group
- 5 meetings of Audit & Sustainability Committee to review performance
- NILGA became a Real Living Wage Employer and was approached as sectoral leader for other initiatives
- NILGA collaborating with the Local Government Training Group and Ards and North Down Borough Council to pilot the design and development of engaging/interactive content for Councils' Learning Management Systems.
- NILGA leading delivery of sessions on misinformation and CoPilot among UK & Irish LGAs
- NILGA is regularly invited to represent the sector's views at strategic level
- NILGA approached to jointly lead establishment of Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) branch
- Partnerships with other LGAs and LGSC developing positively
- Relationships with DfC, DfE, DoF and DfI developing positively
- NILGA Conference 2026 announced, partnerships secured & ongoing
- Relationships developed with private sector to generate transformation & improvement opportunities & facilitate delivery of Regional Programme
- Relations developed with academics for research projects and delivery of learning opportunities for councillors

18th May 2026

Mayor
Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
COLERAINE
BT52 1EY

Dear Mayor

**Annual Battle of the Somme Remembrance Parade and Service
Knockagh War Memorial, Carrickfergus
Sunday 28 June 2026**

I write on behalf of Mid & East Antrim Borough Council and the Knockagh Monument Joint Committee to invite you, and the Council's Aldermen and Councillors, to attend the Annual Battle of the Somme Remembrance Parade and Service to be held at the Knockagh War Memorial on Sunday 28 June 2026. **The Parade will form up at the Knockagh War Memorial at 10.40 am, to be followed by a Service at 11.00 am.** Parking will be available in the field adjacent to the monument. Following the Service, you are invited to Carrickfergus Town Hall, Antrim Street, for a light buffet lunch. Please feel free to extend this invitation to your Freeman, including Legacy Freeman.

For ease of administration and for catering purposes, I should be grateful if you would complete the attached form and return it to Member Services, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ or email members.services@midandeastantrim.gov.uk by Friday 19 June 2026.

I hope you will be able to join us for this significant event.

Yours sincerely



Cllr. Jackson Minford
Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough

Please reply to:

Head Office
The Braid
1-29 Bridge Street
Ballymena BT43 5EJ

Ballymena Office
Ardeevin
80 Galgorm Road
Ballymena BT42 1AB

Carrickfergus Office
Museum & Civic Centre
11 Antrim Street
Carrickfergus BT38 7DG

Larne Office
Smiley Buildings
Victoria Road
Larne BT40 1RU

Planning Office
Silverwood Business Park
190 Raceview Road
Ballymena
BT42 4HZ

**Interim Chief
Executive**
Valerie Watts