



Members' Newsletter February 2020

NAC Long Service Awards

The National Association of Councillors Long Service Award is presented to Northern Ireland Councillors in recognition of their many years of dedicated work and the outstanding contribution that they have made during that time in supporting people and communities.

This year the awards were presented to Ald Fraser Agnew of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and Ald Tommy Nicholl of Mid & East Antrim Borough Council for 39 years service each and to Ald Robert Gibson of Ards & North Down Borough Council for 35 years service.



The awards were presented at the Local Government Awards event in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Belfast by the NAC NI Region Chair, Alderman Tommy Sandford and the NI Region Secretary, Councillor Joe Boyle with the details having been kept a closely guarded secret until the event night.

2020 Local Government Awards

The NAC award for Best Initiative by a Councillor/Councillor Group was presented to Cllr Cheryl Johnston of Mid & East Antrim Borough Council at the awards event which took place on Thursday 20 February 2020.

Further details including Cllr Johnston's achievements in relation to the award can be seen on the [NAC Website](#)



Freedom of the City of Lisburn & Castlereagh

The NAC are delighted that one of our longest serving councillors, and highly esteemed member of this organisation, Alderman Jim Dillon MBE JP has been honoured with the high accolade of Freedom of the City of Lisburn & Castlereagh for his contribution to public life. We extend our congratulations to Alderman Dillon and to previous NAC members, Mrs Geraldine Rice MBE and Mr Tommy Jeffers who have also been made Freemen for their long service and commitment to their work as elected members.



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New NAC National Officers appointments

Two officers of the NAC NI Region Executive Committee have been appointed to positions on the NAC UK Committee. Councillor Charlie Casey was elected as the National Vice-Chair at the NAC UK Annual General Meeting and Conference and Councillor Beth Adger has been selected to join the National Executive Committee.

Code of Conduct

Following our meeting at the Ombudsman's office in November with the Deputy Commissioner for Local Government Standards, Mr Paul McFadden and Mrs Michaela McAleer, Director of Investigations (LGES) we received an offer from them to attend a meeting with our members to answer queries and provide information on how their office operates the processes within the Code of Conduct for Councillors. We are currently making the arrangements for this. We are also in communication with the DfC Minister in relation to the review of the Code of Conduct and dispensations.

Meeting with SOLACE 17 January 2020

This meeting took place at the NILGA offices, with attendees from SOLACE, NILGA and the NAC. All items that we put forward for the agenda were discussed and the SOLACE Chair agreed to raise the points made at their next meeting on 7 February 2020.

LGTG Meeting 22 January 2020

Since the last meeting of this group, the NAC had written to all councils asking for their input and the feedback we received was included in our input section of the meeting. It was reported that the LGTG review process may be slightly delayed due to non-appointment of consultants but this should be resolved soon and Mr Stephen Reid said we will be kept informed of significant updates that may take place before our next meeting on 22 April 2020.

Councillor Wellbeing Meeting 17 February 2020

The NAC Executive Committee met to exclusively discuss current councillor issues and the topics debated included mental health, social media abuse, equality and NAC status. Actions decided on from this meeting will now be carried out and reviewed by the Executive Committee at a meeting on Monday 9 March 2020. Councillors will be updated on progress being made.

NAC Members' Meetings

Our first Members' Meeting of the new decade was hosted by Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council at Mossley Mill on 19 February 2020. The Mayor Ald John Smyth welcomed the NAC delegates to the chambers. Our next Members' Meeting takes place on 15 April 2020 within the Ards & North Down Borough, the meeting venue is to be confirmed and will be advised to members in advance and published on the [NAC Website](#).