



CHIEF EXECUTIVES OFFICE			
CX	IMPR	BSM	CMS
RMU	LICOMM	GRU	P&L
03 APR 2009			
			CORP
OTHER	DEVEL.	LEGAL	H&ES
REFERENCE	MKN 188/03		

2nd April 2009

Dear Chief Executive,

NILGA Annual Subscriptions 2009/10

Please find enclosed the invoice for your council's annual subscription to NILGA for the year 2009/10.

At the NILGA Executive Committee meeting on the 12th December 2008 members decided that an increase of 2.5% was required for the 2009/2010 annual subscriptions. However, NILGA has agreed to waive this increase for one year in light of the ongoing local government finance issues and therefore the overall total subscription remains at the 2008/09 level. Your council's contribution is calculated using the most recent (January 2009) penny rate product figures for each district, as a result there may be a slight variation from your 08/09 subscription amount.

As stated in the constitution subscriptions are payable in full by the end of May 2010. If you have any queries or wish to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact me at the number below.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Moorhead

Heather Moorhead
Chief Executive

CORE IMPROVEMENT TEAM	
08 APR 2009	
Forward to	.K.P.V.N.
Reference	GM 09/04.

the voice of local government



N.I.L.G.A.
 Unit 5B Castlereagh Business Park
 478 Castlereagh Road
 BELFAST
 BT5 6QA

VAT Reg No: 283057945

Invoice

Belfast City Council
 Central Transactions Unit
 Adelaide Exchange
 24-26 Adelaide Street
 BELFAST
 BT2 8GD
 VAT Reg No:

Invoice No.	2137
Invoice/Tax Date	02/04/2009
Order No.	
Account No.	BELFASTC

Quantity	Details	Unit Price	Net Amount	VAT Rate	VAT
1.00	NILGA Annual Subscription 2009/2010	106,627.00	106,627.00	15.00	15,994.05

the voice of local government

Please note our new contact details above.

Total Net Amount	106,627.00
Carriage Net	0.00
Total VAT Amount	15,994.05
Invoice Total	122,621.05



CHIEF EXECUTIVES OFFICE			
CX	CMR	BSM	CMS
RMU	C:COMM	GRU	P&L
11 MAR 2009			
OTHER		DEVEL.	LEGAL
REFERENCE		MCN 78103	

*Shirley
W Heaney*

to Rep to P & R

COPY

10th March 2009

the voice of local government

Dear Chief Executive,

Re. NILGA Annual Plan, Subscriptions and Constitutional Update

1. General Progress, Annual Plan and New Structures

As you may be aware NILGA set out in the Framework of Engagement last year an agreement to visit councils each year to consult on our annual business plan and provide an opportunity for improved dialogue with councils.

Please therefore find enclosed the NILGA annual plan, attached in Annex B, which was agreed in principle at the NILGA Full Members meeting at the end of January. In the document we report on progress made last year. I hope you agree that the efforts of members and staff have resulted in significant developments over the past year. An emphasis was placed on working in partnership and it is important to note that to best represent the sector, all NILGA committees and working groups contain both Councillors and officers from local government. A flavour of the key successes and challenges are summarised below.

Key Successes

- NILGA President Cllr Helen Quigley led a successful local government lobbying campaign to secure an **£8M rates support package for Local Government** from Minister Dodds. Cllr Quigley supported by SOLACE is currently championing high profile campaigns on the role local government can play in response to the economic down turn and the important issue of securing resources to fund the reform of local government.
- Local Government's engagement with Ministers, Government Departments and in Europe was greatly enhanced over the past year. A summary achievements include the following:
 - ✓ Cllr **Shaun Gallagher**, SDLP, leads the local government participation on the Strategic Waste Board (SWB) and chairs NILGAs Waste Working Group. A successful event at Stormont attended by MEP's, MLA's and Councillor's conveyed the importance and urgency of work on waste. A forthcoming waste conference will be designed to keep the emphasis firmly on this issue. Waste is a fast moving environment and NILGA will

- NILGA has a strong team working with the Minister of the Environment representing the interests of Local Government on the reform of local government.
 - ✓ There are 10 elected members representing Local Government on the Strategic Leadership Board with the NILGA President Helen Quigley leading the team.
 - ✓ The three Policy Development Panels have in total 30 Councillors supported by 6 Chief Executives developing policy on areas such as governance, performance management and models for service delivery.
 - PDP A is currently chaired by Cllr Joanne Bunting DUP, with Cllr Sean Begley SF as vice chair – the panel has produced recommendations on governance arrangements for councils post 2011 and on governance arrangements for statutory transition committees.
 - PDP B is chaired by Cllr Helen Quigley SDLP with Cllr Eddie Rea UUP as vice chair – the panel has agreed proposals for a service delivery and performance management framework. They are currently working on 4 strategies: customer relations, procurement, service delivery and performance management.
 - PDP C is chaired by Ald Arnold Hatch UUP with Cllr Myreve Chambers DUP as vice chair – Panel C has a large remit across all structural reform aspects of local government. The panel has involved over 50 local government officers in the work of subcommittees e.g. HR, Finance and Estates, and Capacity Building. The panel is working closely with Chief Executives across Northern Ireland to define the functions transferring to local government and to design the delivery of these functions for the benefit of the citizen.

Key Challenges

- Supporting the widespread involvement of Councillors and officers in the reform of local government against a challenging timetable.
- Improving the quality of service delivery to Councillors and Councils.
- Working to develop policy on a wide range of issues through a process of engagement and negotiation within extremely limited time scales.
- The retention of staff in an environment of temporary contracts and uncertainty.

What we plan to do in 2009/10

The annual plan sets out the key areas of work for NILGA in the coming year. The key issues we will be focusing on are;

- Representing Local government on key policy issues
- Supporting strong local government engagement in the RPA policy development process

- Supporting negotiations between central and local government on implementation issues and a resources package to support the RPA implementation
- Working in partnership with the DoE to implement the Communication Strategy
- Developing a local government RPA Implementation Plan
- Bringing forward key projects to support local government – e.g. A Climate Change package and economic recovery package

How we will deliver (Emerging Structures)

I would also like to bring your attention to the emerging structures within NILGA. (A diagram is attached in annex A). Members have proposed these arrangements to support the development of a greater strategic approach and it will ensure that more Councillors are involved in the work of NILGA.

Strategic Policy Committee

(Agreed as part of the IDeA recommendations)

This committee will meet quarterly and will focus on developing a strategic approach to policy development for local government. The Committee will comprise one member from each party and the chairs of all the NILGA policy subgroups (i.e. Waste, Europe, Agriculture, Planning, Health and Environment, etc). The panel will be supported by Chief Executives and key officers.

People and Employment Panel

(Agreed as part of the IDeA Recommendations, and informed by the deliberations at a joint NIJC/JNC strategic away day)

This panel will meet quarterly and will be an amalgamation of the NIJC and JNC political groupings. The role of the new panel will be to support the development of a strategic approach to employment issues and will be driven by the development of a workforce strategy. As part of this work, a key task will be to review the arrangements to ensure fitness for purpose to support the new 11 Councils. This group will also be supported by Chief Executives and HR professional officers.

Economic Development Committee

(NILGA agreed to urgently progress the establishment of this committee in the light of the pressing economic conditions)

The need to establish this committee was agreed some time ago, but has not been actioned due to limited resources. The committee will soon be established and will comprise 10 elected members, two from each party. The group will be directly supported by Chief Executives and officers from the Local Economic Development Forum. This group will also meet quarterly.

Meeting Arrangements

- NILGA propose to reduce our full members meeting cycle from six meetings a year to five. We propose that to support a greater level of engagement we would suggest instituting an annual meeting with NILGA Office Bearers and Chairs/Mayors and Chief Executives of Councils.

- We are also proposing a reduction in the number of Executive meetings from 11 to 10. The additional time provided would be used to support the office bearers to take time to review ongoing work or to facilitate other meetings.

Subscriptions

I would like to confirm that NILGA has agreed to waive the annual increase of 2.5% in light of the financial pressure facing councils. This is predicted to result in a deficit of £42k by the end of the year and therefore the Executive has requested that NILGA officers explore the potential to develop several income generation projects over the year to minimise this impact.

Constitution (Suspension of the Implementation of Clauses 13 and 14)

As members will be aware from our letter in October of last year NILGA has, subsequent to legal advice, been seeking to strengthen the protections for councils within the constitution. The key issues are the arrangements for council withdrawal and responsibility for liabilities.

While the majority of councils accepted the changes, some have expressed concerns with the liability arrangements. Therefore NILGA agreed at the January Full Member's Meeting to suspend the implementation of clauses 13 and 14 and to consider these issues in the context of establishing new arrangements to suit the 11 council model. DoE has commissioned PWC to develop service delivery models and to consider some of the issues in redesigning new arrangements which would be suitable to support the new 11 councils. NILGA will continue to explore the legal issues and will draw on the PWC work in beginning a wider debate to support future arrangements.

Response to developments and Visits to Councils

We would like to request an opportunity for a NILGA delegation to meet with your council to listen to your comments and concerns in relation to any aspect of the ongoing work and to make a short presentation in relation to NILGA activities and RPA generally. We would also welcome written views on any of the issues raised in this letter.

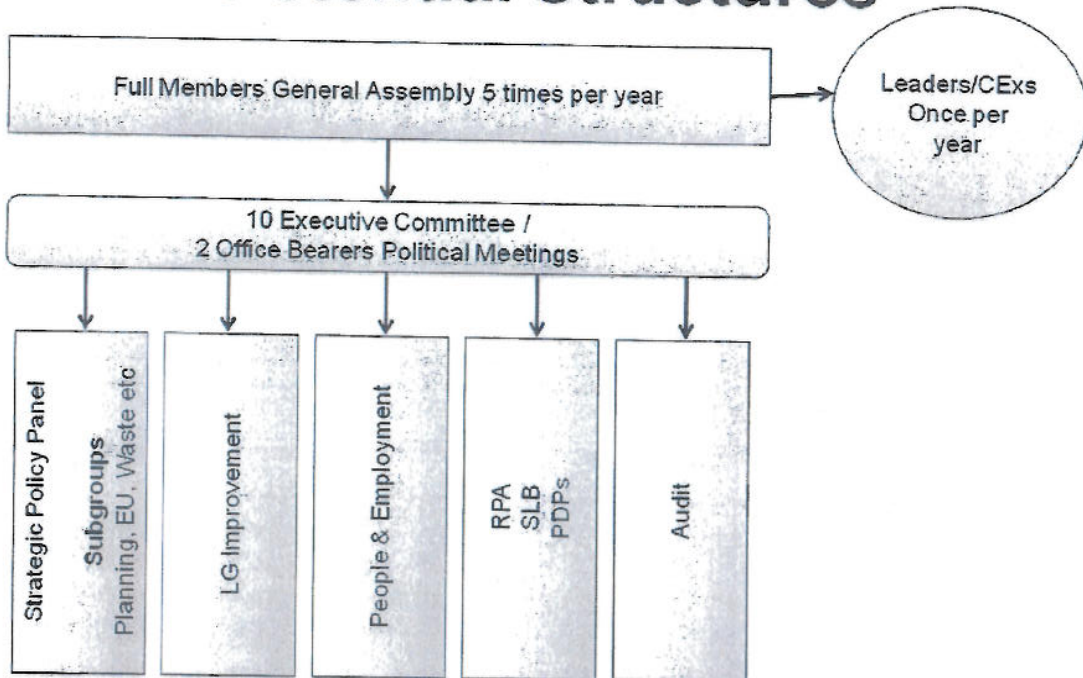
I look forward to hearing from your council in due course and thank you for your ongoing engagement.

Yours sincerely,



Heather Moorhead
Chief Executive

Potential Structures





Annex B

NILGA BUSINESS PLAN APRIL 2009 – MARCH 2010 COUNCIL CONSULTATION

January 2009

1. Background

A key element of the agreed **NILGA Framework of Engagement with Constituent Councils** requires the organisation to develop and consult with Councils on an **Annual Work Plan and Proposed Subscription Rate**. This document sets out NILGA's:-

- key achievements and activities for 2008/09;
- planned activities for 2009/10; and

2. NILGA's Objectives

"To be the voice of strong, democratic local government and the champion of improved services to citizens."

"To work with councils and other stakeholders to champion and support the development of a world class local government system in Northern Ireland which works in partnership with others to serve citizens".

3. Progress against Strategic Plan

The NILGA Strategic Plan is articulated against six strategic themes. Progress against last year's Work Plan and proposed activities for 2009/2010 are presented against these six themes.

Strategic Theme 1	Building Strong Relationships	
Planned Outcomes	Key Achievements 2008/09	Planned activity 2009/10
Improved relations with Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework of Engagement agreed and implemented • Round of visit with Councils completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework of Engagement reviewed and revised • 26 Councils visited • Council Customer Survey conducted and action plan developed • Dialogue with Newtownabbey BC undertaken and issues addressed
Improved relations with local government officer groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established an Officer Working Group Forum (Officer attendance at NILGA Full members and 1 Meeting) • Facilitated Local Government officer group involvement in RPA Structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Meetings of the Officer Working Group Forum • NILGA represented on LGEMG and on IT Officers' Group • Customer Service Professional Reference Group established
Improved relations with political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater ad hoc engagement with Parties and Assembly groups • 6 Briefing sessions with Parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed liaison mechanisms with parties • Councillor Customer Survey conducted and action plan developed
Improved relations with other local government organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly meetings convened with SOLACE • Quarterly meetings convened with NAC • Memorandum of Understanding agreed with LGSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol agreed with other local government organisations • (Currently negotiations underway to improve the UK Local Government Forum)
Improved relations with other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fortnightly meetings established with DOE Joint Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols for Joint Secretariat working developed and implemented • Stakeholder Strategy developed

Strategic Theme 2		
Provision of Effective and Innovative Communication Systems across Local Government and with Stakeholders		
Planned Outcomes	Key Achievements 2008/09	Planned activity 2009/10
NILGA will have excellent two way communication mechanisms and protocols with and between councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Liaison Officers Agreed • Papers for NILGA meeting Emailed to all Councils 7 days in advance of meetings • Improved Council Letters protocol • Events were hosted to inform and gather views from the sector:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NILGA Conference 2008 • Youth Services Away Day • Waste Awareness Event • Arts Conference • Community Safety Seminar • Planning Away Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications Strategy developed and implemented • All NILGA communication mechanisms reviewed and standards improved
NILGA will have a first class Website which is easily accessed and is regularly updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Website undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NILGA website enhanced to provide online access to councillors by citizens • Maintenance and update facilities improved
NILGA will produce a series of newsletters, e-zines and briefings which can be easily accessed by all our stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly NILGA newsletters and RPA updates produced to provide councils with key information • E mailed to database of contacts across local and central government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NILGA website developed to provide communities of interest for NILGA members
Local government will have a positive image in the local media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media presence enhanced on RPA, Waste, Rates Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with media enhanced • Positive media image developed • Marketing Strategy developed
NILGA will have excellent internal communication systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal systems established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal communication systems reviewed and enhanced

Strategic Theme 3 Developing Local Government Policy and Influencing Government		
Planned Outcomes	Key Achievements 2008/09	Planned activity 2009/10
NILGA will have a transparent policy development mechanism and a citizen centred approach to policy making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of NILGA Working Groups undertaken • Review of Policy Making Procedures undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Working Group structure implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Policy Committee • Economic Development Committee • People & Employment Committee • Revised policy making processes implemented
NILGA will develop an influencing strategy to ensure resources and activities are focused on the key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New EU Policy Framework and enhanced profile in Europe developed • Youth Services Policy Document drafted • Clean Neighbourhood agenda - negotiation and lobbying Responses submitted by NILGA on the following key government consultations, eg:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parades Review • Community Safety • Rating of Empty Homes • Civic Forum • Local Government represented on the Strategic Leadership Board and the three Policy Development Panels • Local Government Voice facilitated on the Strategic Waste Board • Councillors represented on the following QUANGOS:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Bodies • NI Libraries Authority • Education and Skills Authority • Central government lobbied on LPS and Rates Issues • Council Consultation facilitated on Planning and PPS 21 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central/local government arrangements developed (To press for Concordat with Central Government) • Strategic Policy Committee operational and effective in prioritising policy areas • Business Case submitted for RPA

Strategic Theme 4		Supporting Local Government Modernisation	
Planned Outcomes	Key Achievements 2008/09	Planned activity 2009/10	
NILGA will have worked with stakeholders and suppliers to deliver an effective Capacity Building Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation and participation in Capacity Building Subgroup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Building Programme developed Capacity Building programme in place for elected members 	
NILGA will have agreed an outline implementation plan for local government reorganisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment brief for consultancy assignment successfully tendered RPA process facilitated through Joint Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultancy assignment completed to high specification RPA Process facilitated through SLB, PDPs and RTCG 	
NILGA will have agreed an outline implementation plan for modernisation and improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultancy assignment for IS Strategy completed Mobile working pilots developed GIS pilots developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service Strategy developed IS Strategy for local government agreed Procurement Strategy developed Shared Services Strategy developed Service Delivery and Performance Improvement Framework developed 	
There will be an local government best practice programme supported by a local government awards scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot Local Government Awards Scheme Launched 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme developed to increase profile, share information and promote best practice 	

Strategic Theme 5		Providing effective and efficient services to Local Government	
Planned Outcomes	Key Achievements 2008/09	Planned activity 2009/10	
NIJC will have supported the development of an HR strategy and effective negotiating positions with unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation and participation in HR Subgroup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIJC reviewed HR Strategy developed Negotiating mechanisms developed and implemented People and Employment Committee established and effective 	
NILGA will have developed a proactive and supportive approach to support the delivery of the Waste Management Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided secretariat to Strategic Waste Board Participation in UK Packaging and recycling Working Group Waste Awareness Event Fly tipping – negotiation with central government on powers and operational issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Secretariat Agree Framework of Operation with three Waste Groups Enhance research work on waste 	
NILGA will have supported an effective EU engagement programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Level Agreement with LGA reviewed Significantly enhanced NI Local Government profile in Brussels and with Central Government 2 Capacity Building Visits EU Strategy Agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance EU activities to support lobbying, engagement and local government partnering and access to funding 	
NILGA will have developed a strategic approach to supporting the arts in local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the Forum for Local Government and the Arts Arts Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FLGA reviewed and strategic approach developed 	
NILGA will have developed a pro-active approach to accessing resources to support the development of local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change bid developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future funding opportunities explored 	

Strategic Theme 6		Providing efficient and effective internal systems and processes	
Planned Outcomes	Key Achievements 2008/09	Planned activity 2009/10	
NILGA will have effective financial management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine Systems • Audit Committee established • Risk management system developed and implemented • Develop Income generation projects 	
NILGA will have Investors in People status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance appraisal system introduced • Induction process developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance appraisal system reviewed • Training needs analysis conducted • Investors in People re-accreditation • Staff survey conducted 	
NILGA will develop effective internal administration systems and protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management Team strengthened • New systems in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems and processes reviewed and benchmarked 	
NILGA will develop a suite of policies to support best business practice and legal requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key policies in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal policies reviewed and developed 	
NILGA will have developed a strategic development plan and identified resources for the 2011 -2015 period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £800k - 189% Additionality provided through:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £39k - FLGA • £60k - EU • £661k – DOE (RPA) • £10k – UIB • £30k – DOE (Waste) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust business planning process developed and implemented • Robust project management arrangements developed and implemented • Alternative funding opportunities to support NILGA's work explored (e.g. SEUPB) 	