



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Northern Ireland Local Government Association
Date:	24 th September 2010
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects
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1.0	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>
1.1	Members will be aware that Heather Moorhead, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) recently resigned to take up post in the Health Sector. Over the past few months the vacant NILGA Chief Executive post has been filled on an internal secondment basis.
2.0	<u>Key Issues</u>
2.1	NILGA recently appointed consultants (i.e. AS Associates) to undertake a review of the future leadership requirements for NILGA with a view to informing a recruitment process for appointing a new Chief Executive.
2.2	AS Associates has compiled a draft report which has been circulated to all councils for consideration and comment (a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1). Feedback is requested by 5 th October 2010.
2.3	<p>The draft report gives some consideration to the changing environment in which NILGA operates and the associated challenges which the Association faces (e.g. uncertainty in respect to future funding). It also sets out some proposals in regards to potential future activity of NILGA. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review its constitution and governance arrangements and include protocols to govern relationships with political parties, councils and advisors (e.g. SOLACE); - strengthen the relationship between central and local government; - support local government reform and improvement; - support Member development; - look at additional funding opportunities recognising the weakness of the current position; - devise (in consultation with councils) a new work plan which is relevant to the current issues and challenges for local government; and - implement a range of steps to ensure that the work of NILGA is valued by members councils.
2.4	<p>The report sets out the following proposals in regards to the appointment of the new Chief Executive post:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need to agree a new job description and person specification (a proposed draft is appended to the AS Associates report); - the appointment should be for a fixed-term of four or five years with the ability to terminate the contract for unsatisfactory performance and the ability to extend the contract by mutual agreement; - salary be set at £76,000 with annual increments of £2,000 based on performance and up to a threshold of £84,000;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure that an appropriate and robust performance appraisal system is in place so that the postholder is held to account for performance; and - ensure that the new Chief Executive post is appointed through a rigorous selection process with keys stakeholders acting as advisors.
2.5	Members will note that NILGA currently receive a large element of funding from the DoE to support the RPA reform programme and the established implementation structures which had been in place (e.g. Strategic Leadership Board, Policy Development Panels). The uncertainties around reform, the fact that the majority of RPA policy related work is largely complete and the budgetary pressures facing the DoE mean that such funding is unlikely to be maintained at current levels. Furthermore, given the current economic pressures facing all councils (including Belfast), the continued payment of annual subscription fees will be subject to a value for money assessment.
2.6	Within this context, it will be important in moving forward that NILGA ensures that it is a lean and focused organisation which provides value for money to its members. It is suggested that Members may wish to respond to NILGA on this basis and recommend that it may wish to concentrate its efforts on those issues which may need regional coordination and consistency.
2.7	Consideration will also need to be given to the sustainability and relevance of the current NILGA organisational structure and staff complement given that it was put in place as an interim measure to assist the policy formulation phase of the RPA process which is now complete.
	<i>Northern Ireland Local Government Association</i>
2.8	The Northern Ireland Local Government Association held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 17 th September 2010. A list of confirmed elected Member appointments (including Belfast City Council Members) to the positions of President; Vice Presidents; Executive Committee; Working Groups and Outside Bodies is attached at Appendix 2 . Members will note that Councillor Tom Ekin has been appointed as a Vice President to NILGA.

3.0 Resource Implications

There are no significant resource implications contained within this report. The council will continue it's current and medium to long term work in relation to vacancy control.

4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and consider responding to NILGA on the basis of paragraphs 2.5-2.6 above.

5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: AS Associates draft report 'Scoping Exercise of the Future Leadership Requirements for NILGA'
Appendix 2: NILGA Membership September 2010 Annual General Meeting