

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Council Meeting</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>4 April 2023</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b>	
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

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	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

The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

2.0 The following correspondence has been received:

### 2.1 Grainne Long, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, dated 3 March 2023 (copy attached)

Correspondence has been received from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in response to correspondence from Council in relation to the ongoing industrial action and impact on tenants.

### 2.2 NI Housing Council correspondence, dated 10 March 2023 (copy attached)

Please find attached the Housing Council's March bulletin, and a copy of the February Housing Council minutes.

### 2.3 Marie Ward, Newry Mourne and Down District Council, dated 15 March 2023 (copy attached)

At a Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on 6 March 2023 the following motion was agreed:

#### **Motion**

*"Newry Mourne and Down District Council calls for the voting age of 18 to be reduced to 16 and if this motion is adopted seeks the support of the remaining councils in Northern Ireland to write to the Secretary of State calling him to amend the necessary legislation to enable 16 year old and upwards to vote."*

On speaking to the motion, many Members agreed this would be a positive way forward and would encourage young people, who are the future, to engage more fully in political life.

The proposer of the motion asked that the motion be circulated to the other 10 Council Chief Executives asking them to table at a future meeting of their Council.

### 2.4 Alison McCullagh, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, dated 28 February 2023 (copy attached)

At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 15 February 2023, Members asked that the Chief Executive write to Council with regard to the WHSCT Public Consultation on the South West Acute Hospital (SWAH) and ask that Council respond to the consultation in a positive manner and argue for the retention of the full suite of services at the Hospital.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council trusts that Council will give this issue due consideration and looks forward to receiving a response.

**2.5 National Association of Councillors, Northern Ireland Region dated 23 March 2023** (copy attached)

NAC Draft Constitution Revised 15 March 2023, is enclosed for information. Any comments can be sent by email to: [office@nac-ni.org](mailto:office@nac-ni.org) no later than Friday 28th April 2023.

**2.6 Anthony Carleton, Department for Communities, dated 24 March 2023** (copy attached)

**Extract**

*A further extension order has therefore been made to extend section 78 of the Coronavirus Act for a further 6 months, until 24 September 2023. The Coronavirus Act 2020 (Extension of Provisions Relating to Local Authority Meetings) (No2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023 was made on 23 March. As previously highlighted in my earlier letter of September 2022, an Order to extend section 78 of [the Coronavirus Act](#) is subject to the confirmatory procedure in the Assembly and, whilst it comes into operation once made, it will cease to have effect 40 days from the date of making unless it has been approved by resolution of the Assembly (the 40 day period does not include any time in which the Assembly is dissolved, in recess for more than 4 days or adjourned for more than 6 days). The Department will monitor the situation and keep councils informed.*

**3.0 It is recommended** that Council consider the correspondence.

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Joanne Keen  
Committee & Member Services Officer  
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council  
Civic Headquarters, Cloonavin  
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Via Email: [REDACTED] [@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

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6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Dear Joanne

Thank you for your letter on behalf of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council regarding the impact of our on-going industrial action.

I share your concerns regarding the industrial action and the detrimental impact that this is having on our tenants and customers within Causeway Coast and Glens. I can assure you that I have sought to work constructively with my union colleagues to try and reach a reasonable solution to end both the industrial action and address their joint local claim.

After what I believed to be constructive talks, facilitated by the LRA during November and December, I made a final offer in good faith and as a genuine attempt to reach a resolution to these issues. This included a one off payment of £1000 net to staff earning up to £32,000 and £500 net for all staff above. Taking both the national pay award (for 22/23) and our one off cost of living payment, this amounts to a circa **17%** increase for our lowest pay bands a circa **11%** increase for those in our middle pay band for the year.

Unfortunately, both NIPSA and UNITE have since rejected this offer. I will be asking both Unions to reconsider their decision again as we approach the end of the financial year and enter ~~and~~ what will be an even more challenging period next year.

It is important to note that UNITE's industrial action relates to 'a trade dispute over 2021/22 pay, including all matters arising out of and in consequence of this dispute'. You will be aware that the National Employers have now made an offer for 2023/24 including a consolidated increase of £1925 for Green Book employees. This replicates the pay award for 2022/23 – both of which were developed in light of the cost of living crisis. As you will

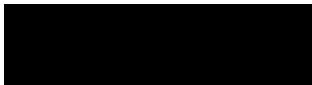
appreciate Housing Executive pay is subject to these national collective bargaining arrangements which we honour and implement in full.

I will, of course, continue to engage with union colleagues about these matters but as it stands their requests are simply unaffordable.

Following UNITE's refusal to provide emergency cover during the period of industrial action, we engaged contractors to ensure that we can continue to provide emergency cover and other key services as far as possible. We engaged a neighbouring response contractor to provide emergency cover and another contractor to carry out change of tenancies and shower room adaptations. Unfortunately, in December 2022 the contractor providing change of tenancy and shower room adaptations went into administration and we therefore now have to make alternative arrangements. Therefore, and as the industrial action has become protracted, we have commenced discussions with other existing contractors and we now intend to issue a direct award contract to ensure that we can provide change of tenancy and minor adaptations, while another longer term tender arrangement is put in place. I recognise that our ability to provide the full service required by our customers is limited at present, however, I expect that these new arrangements will be in place in March 2023.

I hope this addresses your concerns. I am happy to stay in touch on the matter.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Grainia Long.

**Grainia Long**  
**Chief Executive**



**CHAIR**  
**Councillor Anne-Marie Fitzgerald**

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## **MARCH HOUSING COUNCIL BULLETIN**

The Northern Ireland Housing Council met on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 10.00 am in the Boardroom, the Housing Centre of via Conference Call.

For Information, a report of the attendance is undernoted:-

### **Present**

Anne-Marie Fitzgerald	Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair)
Mark Cooper	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair)
Jim Speers	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
Amanda Grehan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City
Allan Bresland	Derry City & Strabane District
Tommy Nicholl	Mid & East Antrim Borough

### **Apologies**

Catherine Elattar	Mid Ulster Borough
Victoria Moore	Ards & North Down Borough
Micky Murray	Belfast City
Michael Ruane	Newry & Mourne District

Discussions on the undernoted matters took place as follows:-

### **Report from Grainia Long, Chief Executive, Housing Executive**

The Report provided the Housing Council with a monthly update summarising a range of strategic, major or routine matters, including any emerging issues. A summary of the current / emerging issues are outlined as follows:-

- **Industrial Relations**
- **Review following Awaab Ishak inquest**
- **Supporting People Emerging Issue - Rossorry Grove**
- **Fundamental Review of Allocations (FRA)**
- **Low Income Rates Relief Project – Civil Service Awards**
- **Contribution to the Development of the NI Climate Action Plan**
- **Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation**
- **Review of Disabled Facilities Grants**
- **Performance Update**
- **Budget 2023/24**

Members also received a Presentation by Co-Ownership on the over 55's scheme and received the Housing Executive's draft Final Report on Damp, Mould & Condensation.

Once the minutes of the meeting are ratified, they can be accessed on the Housing Council website: [www.nihousingcouncil.org](http://www.nihousingcouncil.org)

Due to forthcoming local elections, there will be no meetings in April and May, therefore following Councils AGM's, and the nominations to the Housing Council, a suitable date will be arranged in June.

Should you require any further information or have any questions regarding the content.

**Contacts**

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**Minutes of the 498<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
of the Northern Ireland Housing Council held on  
Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 10 am via Zoom**

**Present**

Cllr Anne-Marie Fitzgerald	Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair)
Cllr Mark Cooper	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair)
Cllr Victoria Moore	Ards & North Down Borough
Ald Jim Speers	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
Cllr Micky Murray	Belfast City Council
Ald Adrian McQuillan	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough
Ald Allan Bresland	Derry & Strabane Borough
Ald Amanda Grehan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City
Ald Tommy Nicholl	Mid & East Antrim Borough
Cllr Michael Ruane	Newry, Mourne & Down District

**In Attendance:**

David Polley	Director, Housing Supply Policy, Department for Communities
Heloise Browne	Department for Communities
Jenny Williamson	Business Manager, NIHE
Fiona Neilan	Project Manager, NIHE
Kelly Cameron	Secretary (NIHE Secretariat)

**Apologies:**

Cllr Catherine Elattar	Mid Ulster Borough
Grainia Long	Chief Executive, NIHE
Paul Price	Director of Social Housing Policy & Oversight, Department for Communities

<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Welcome</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed David Polley and Heloise Browne from the Department for Communities and from the Housing Executive, Catherine McFarland</p> <p>She also welcomed the Presenter, Fiona Neilan from the Housing Executive.</p> <p>The Chair also welcomed the new representatives for Belfast City Council Councillor Micky Murray to his first meeting of the Housing Council.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>No declarations were received.</p>	



3.	<p><b><u>To adopt the Minutes of the 497th Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023</u></b></p> <p>It was proposed by Alderman Jim Speers seconded by Alderman Allan Bresland and resolved, that the Minutes of the 497<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Housing Council held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair.</p>	
4.  4.1  4.2 ss	<p><b><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes</u></b></p> <p><b>Page 3 Item 6.15 - Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation</b></p> <p>It was noted that Councillor Cooper had been contacted directly by Housing Executive staff in relation to specific statistical information and he was content with the information provided.</p> <p><b><u>Page 5 Item 11.3 - Central Housing Forum Annual Community Conference titled 'the Cost of Living'</u></b></p> <p>It was reported that at the last Housing Council meeting, it was proposed and seconded for the Housing Council to sponsor the Annual Community Conference, Unfortunately the Housing Executive are funding this event and are jointly running the event, unfortunately due to a conflict of interest it was not possible to sponsor such an event.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b> that an invitation to be issued to the Central Housing Forum inviting representatives to attend a future meeting.</p> <p>All other matters will be dealt with through the Meeting.</p>	Secretary
5.	<p><b><u>Forward Workplan</u></b></p> <p>The forward workplan was noted.</p>	
6.  6.1  6.2  6.3  6.4  6.5  6.6  6.7  6.8	<p><b><u>Update by Heloise Brown and David Polley from the Department for Communities on Housing Top Issues:-</u></b></p> <p><b>Social Newbuild starts</b></p> <p><b>Co-ownership</b></p> <p><b>Programme for Social Reform</b></p> <p><b>Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations Policy</b></p> <p><b>Housing Executive's House Sales Scheme</b></p> <p><b>Supporting People Delivery Strategy</b></p> <p><b>Homelessness Strategy</b></p> <p><b>Regulation of the Private Rented Sector</b></p>	

<p>6.9</p> <p>6.10</p> <p>6.11</p> <p>6.12</p> <p>6.13</p> <p>6.14</p> <p>6.15</p> <p>6.16</p> <p>6.17</p> <p>6.18</p>	<p><b>Increasing Housing Supply</b></p> <p>D Polley undertook to provide a link to the Department for Communities summary document on Intermediate rent, for information.</p> <p><b>Affordable Warmth Scheme</b></p> <p><b>Review the Caravans Act (NI) 2011</b></p> <p><b>ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014 -2020</b></p> <p>Referring to a contractor engaged in the programme and went into administration in December 2022, putting at risk a number of planned schemes. Councillor Mark Cooper requested further details on which schemes will be affect by this Contractor.</p> <p><b>Housing Executive historical debt and exclusion from having to pay Corporation Tax</b></p> <p><b>Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes Framework Long term rent trajectory</b></p> <p><b>Affordability of social rents</b></p> <p><b>Housing Executive Rent</b></p> <p><b>Non ACM Cladding Remediation Scheme</b></p> <p><b>Climate Act DfC will lead on the ‘Residential and Buildings Sector Plan’</b></p>	<p><b>D Polley</b></p> <p><b>Secretary</b></p>
<p>8.+</p>	<p><b><u>Presentation on the Housing Executive’s Fundamental Review of Allocations</u></b></p> <p>Fiona Neilan gave a presentation on the Fundamental Review of Allocations (Copies of the slide are appended to these Minutes – Appendix A).</p> <p>Members noted that the current Housing Selection Scheme has been in place for more than 20 years, but changes were needed to reflect people’s situations and the demand for housing in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>These changes which are being introduced on a phased basis over the next 3 years will help to build on the strengths of the current allocations scheme to enable it to work better for people in need. The changes are in response to the views shared during the Fundamental Review of Allocations consultation, carried out by the Department for Communities in 2017.</p> <p>The changes will help those waiting for a Housing Executive or Housing Association property to secure the right home in the right area.</p> <p>Ms Neilan highlighted the first changes to be introduced, as follows:-</p>	

	<p>1. Give applicants the ability to choose as many or as few areas of choice as they wish.</p> <p>2. Reduce the reasonable number of offers for applicants from three to two.</p> <p>Applicants can currently pick up to two areas of choice with the opportunity to widen these by adding a General Housing Area (GHA) to their application. Following these changes, they will be able to choose as many or as few areas of choice as they wish. It also means that if the Applicant is owed the full statutory homelessness duty (i.e. is a Full Duty Applicant) the wider GHA will no longer be imposed on their choice.</p> <p>Under the revised Scheme all new applicants, and those already on the waiting list, will be entitled to two reasonable offers of accommodation. If they have already refused two reasonable offers at the time the changes come in, they will be entitled to one final reasonable offer. All Applicants will continue to have the right to appeal a decision by the Housing Executive or Housing Association that their offer has been unreasonably refused.</p> <p>The new changes will help reduce re-let times and significantly increase choice for applicants. They will also mean that the General Housing Area (GHA) will no longer be imposed on those applicants who find themselves homeless.</p> <p>Ms Neilan undertook to update Members on the delivery of each stage of the proposals throughout the next three years of the process.</p> <p>Councillor Nicholl felt that Rural areas were still at a disadvantage of social housing not being built and those villagers still wishing to remain in the rural areas have no option but to move to towns or built up areas.</p> <p>Ms Neilan referred to the Housing Executive Latent Demand Testing and rural villages should be identified to address housing need in those rural areas.</p> <p>Ms Neilan assured Members that there will be evaluations/monitoring and measurements of the outcomes of these proposals throughout the process.</p> <p>Ms Neilan undertook to attend future meetings to give regular updates on the implementation of the each of the proposals.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Ms Neilan for a very informative and useful presentation.</p>	F Neilan
9.	<p><b><u>Quarterly Update Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP)</u></b></p> <p>The Report was noted.</p>	
10.	<p><b><u>Housing Starts – January 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Report was noted.</p>	

11.	<p><b><u>Chartered Institute of Housing Conference in Manchester 27th-29th June 2023</u></b></p> <p><b>Agreed:</b> One place to be reserved at this Conference and the name of the representative will be decided in due course.</p>	<b>Secretary</b>
12.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p>	
12.1	<p><b><u>Local Council Elections 2023 – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023</u></b></p> <p><b>Agreed:</b> as Purdah the pre-election period is 6 weeks prior to the election, Members agreed that the April and May Meetings would be postponed.</p>	<b>Secretary</b>
12.2	<p><b><u>Latharna House, Larne</u></b></p> <p>Alderman Nicholl requested an update on Latharna House, Larne.</p>	<b>Secretary</b>
12.	<p><b><u>Date of next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>The next Housing Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 10 am in the Housing Centre or via Zoom,</p>	

The Meeting concluded at 12.10 pm



## **FRA Project** Implementation

### **Update to Housing Council**

9th February 2023 Fiona

Neilan, Project Manager

**Housing**  
Executive



### **FRA Project** Implementation

#### Social Housing Allocations in NI

- Housing Selection Scheme (Housing (NI) Order, 1981)
- Single gateway used by all social landlords in NI
- Overriding principle – priority based on greatest housing need
- Highly valued and fair in its operation
- Largely unchanged since Nov 2000

**Housing**  
Executive

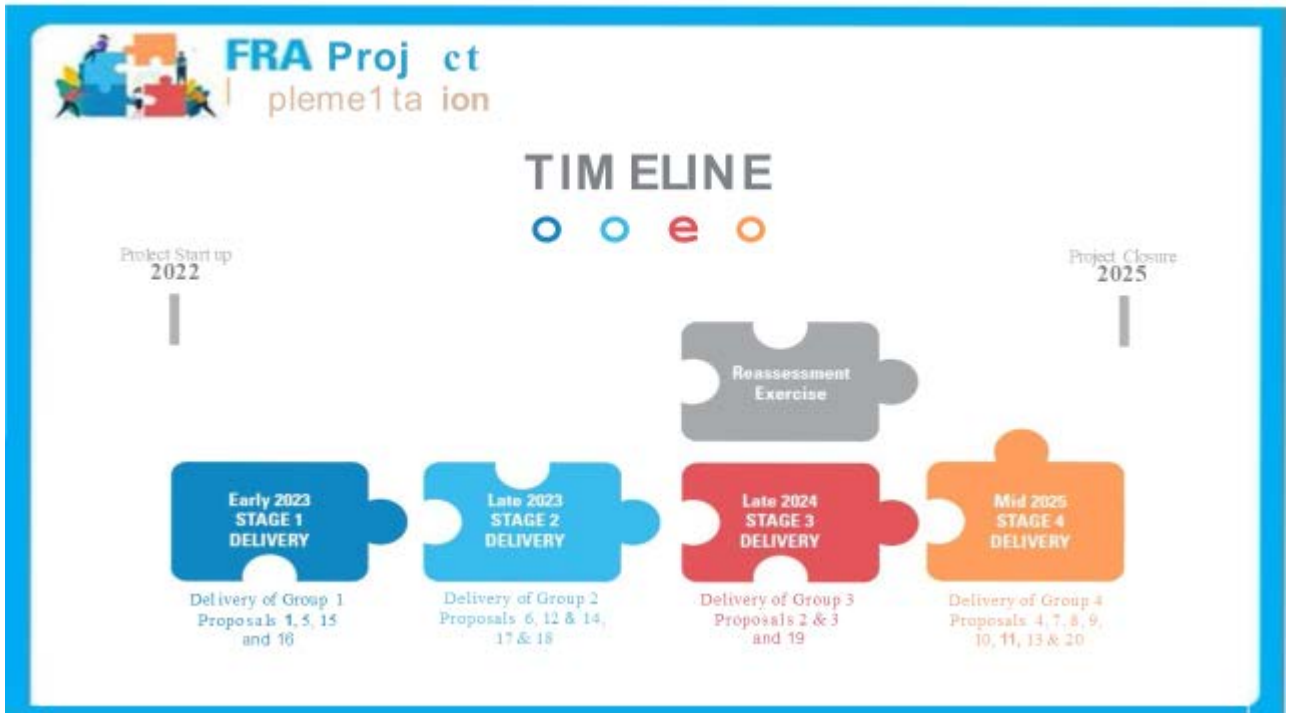


**FRA Project**  
Implementation

### Aim of the FRA Project

The Fundamental Review of Allocations (FRA) Project will implement 20 Proposals for Change, which together will make better use of existing resources by building on the strengths of the current Housing Selection Scheme and Allocations process to enable it to work better for people in need.

**Housing Executive**



**FRA Project Implementation** The proposals for change

**STAGE 1 DELIVERY**

- Proposal 1 - Independent, tenure neutral housing advice service for NI
- Proposal 5 - Greater choice of areas (removal of the GHA, in position)
- Proposal 15 - Reduction from Three to Two reasonable offers
- Proposal 16 - Social landlords may withdraw an offer in specified circumstances

**STAGE 2 DELIVERY**

- Proposal 6 - Greater use of mutual exchange services
- Proposal 12 & 14 - Social landlords should be able to make multiple offers directly and to as many applicants as they think necessary
- Proposal 17 & 18 - With no consent for policy assignments/accessions to general needs and adapted accommodation

**STAGE 3 DELIVERY**

- Proposal 2 & 3 - Measures to clarify ineligibility around ASD for social housing and homelessness
- Proposal 19 - Update HSG to bring it in line with developments in PPAN
- Reassessment Exercise - To facilitate Proposals 8 & 11

**STAGE 4 DELIVERY**

- Proposal 4 - NIHC can meet their homelessness duty on a tenure neutral basis
- Proposal 7 - Investigate how to strengthen the verification process and address inconsistencies in the award of intimidation points
  - Points should reflect current circumstances
  - Investigate alternative approaches for the award of points to applicants in any form of temporary accommodation
- Proposal 8 - Bands based on similar level of need
- Proposal 9 - NIHC to align HSG bedroom requirements to match HB/UC
- Proposal 11 - For different cultural NI properties social landlords should be able to use choice-based letting
- Proposal 20 - Review of allocations process in place for applicants needing specialised property

**Housing Executive**



## FRA Project Implementation

### Stage 1 – Group 1 Delivery (30 January 2023)

Proposal 1	An independent, tenure-neutral housing advice service for NI
Proposal 5	A greater choice of areas for all applicants for a social home
Proposal 15	An applicant may receive two reasonable offers of accommodation
Proposal 16	Social landlords may withdraw an offer of accommodation in specified circumstances

**Housing**  
Executive



## FRA Project Implementation

### Proposal 1

An independent, tenure-neutral housing advice service for NI

**94% support for this proposal**

#### Themes Raised

- Alternative providers have an important role to play – advocacy role in particular
- The importance of independence
- Tenure-neutral advice
- The service should increase options & solutions for applicants

**Housing**  
Executive





**FRA Project**  
Implementation

## Proposal 1 - Implementation

- NIHE have been providing a Housing Solutions and Support service since 2017
- A new page will be added to the NIHE website which will be accessed via the “Advice” tab within “Housing Help”
- Continuous improvement of our Service for our customers

**Housing**  
Executive



**FRA Project**  
Implementation

## Proposal 5

**A greater choice of areas for all applicants for a social home**

**85% support for this proposal**

### Themes Raised

- Importance of person-centred, open & accurate advice
- Increased options allows greater flexibility
- Potential to reduce refusals
- Applicants should not be ‘pushed’ to choose areas

**Housing**  
Executive



## Proposal 5: Key Points

- Will allow customers to choose a greater number of Areas of Choice.
- Removal of the General Housing Area (GHA)
- New applicants have to choose at least 1 CLA but may choose as many (or few) as they wish (1st preference choice for Place Shapers)
- Applicants awarded FDA will no longer have the GHA imposed 6 months after a positive homeless decision.
- Area Based Points can apply to each Common Landlord Area (CLA) where evidence is provided and meets the criteria for award.

**Housing**  
Executive



## Proposal 5: Transitional Arrangements

- Significant number of customers with the GHA applied
- To mitigate any detrimental impact customers now remain on the waiting list for all associated CLAs within those GHAs
- Transitional period in which designated officers will review applications with customers allowing them to
  - ✓ Reassess their Areas of Choice and remove any CLAs they are not interested in.
  - ✓ Ensure that any changes in CLAs are reflected in the award of Area Based OSN points

**Housing**  
Executive



## FRA Project Implementation

### Proposal 15

An applicant may receive two reasonable offers of accommodation

**49% support for this proposal**

#### Themes Raised

- Perception that offers are not always reasonable and suitability criteria should be adopted
- The need for clear understanding/definition of what is a 'reasonable' offer
- Concern that applicants may feel 'forced' to take a property they do not think is suitable
- Perception that refusals are made because applicants are holding out for a better property

**Housing  
Executive**



## FRA Project Implementation

### Impact for all new, existing and deferred applications/transfers

- New applicants are entitled to two reasonable offers and will be advised as such when apply for social housing
- Existing applicants who have not yet received an offer will be entitled to two offers
- Existing applicants who have received one offer will receive one further offer
- Existing applicants who have received two offers will receive one further offer

**Housing  
Executive**



## FRA Project Implementation

### Impact ctd ....

- Deferred applicants who successfully appeal one of their three reasonable offers will receive one additional offer.
- Manually deferred applicants and cancelled applications will be treated in the same way as existing applicants once the deferral is lifted.
- Cancelled applications which are subsequently reinstated will be treated in the same way as existing applicants.

**Housing**  
Executive



## FRA Project Implementation

### The Offer Process

- Changes to our Suite of 8 Offer letters have been updated to reflect reduction from 3 to 2 offers and that the new rule 58A (withdrawal of offers)
- Includes more robust guidance on the right of redress if the customer feels the offer is not suitable:
  - Owed the full housing duty – 40 days to lodge a request for a review with the NIHE Regional Review Officer
  - Not owed the full housing duty – 40 days to lodge a complaint with the Area Manager (HA equivalent)
- Deferral letters have been updated to include right of redress
- Information for customers on what constitutes a Reasonable Offer and the impact of refusing an offer
- Revised policies and procedures for staff on offer management process

**Housing**  
Executive



## FRA Project Implementation

### Proposal 16

Social landlords may withdraw an offer of accommodation in specified circumstances.

**71% support for this proposal**

#### Themes Raised

- The need for more clarity around what circumstances would allow for the withdrawal of an offer
- Need for transparent, clear guidance & a consistent approach
- Fairness is key & applicants should have a right of appeal

**Housing  
Executive**



## FRA Project Implementation

### Proposal 16 – New Rule 58: Withdrawal of Offers

- Rule 58A (1) Discretionary Grounds:
  - A condition set out in the Offer letter is not met or has been breached
  - Where the offer was made on the basis of a material error of fact or law by the Landlord
  - Offer no longer considered reasonable under the rules of the Scheme on the basis of information subsequently becoming available
  - Applicant no longer able to take up occupancy within a reasonable period of time
  - Where, unless the offer is withdrawn, there is likely to be a significant risk to the personal safety of the Applicant, a member of their household or a member of another household within the locality of the property

#### Rule 58A (2) Mandatory Grounds :

- No longer Eligible on the grounds of Unacceptable Behaviour
- No longer Eligible as a Person From Abroad or a Person Subject to Immigration Control

**Housing  
Executive**



**FRA Project**  
Implementation

## Proposal 16 - Key Points

- Rule 58 should only be used in exceptional circumstances and following thorough investigation
- Once a customer has signed the tenancy agreement Rule 58 becomes null and void and can no longer be used
- NIHE Standing Orders Amended – decision by an Assistant Area Manager (Level 7)
- Existing Offer Letter amended and new Withdrawal Letter
- An applicant has 7 days to make a complaint about the withdrawal
- Following the withdrawal of an offer the property **must** be held for 7 days
- The Complaint will be expedited to second stage

**Housing**  
Executive



**FRA Project**  
Implementation

## Communication

- ✓ Mail drop was issued to all households on the Waiting List
- ✓ Press release issued to public reps and key stakeholders
- ✓ Information update on Website and Social Media
- ✓ Awareness / Training sessions for frontline NIHE & Housing Association staff throughout January 2023
- ✓ Revised Customer leaflets and Forms
- ✓ Presentations to key Stakeholders: Central Housing Forum and Housing Community Networks, the Housing Council and Advocacy Groups
- ✓ Stakeholder Advisory Group established

**Housing**  
Executive



**FRA Project**  
Implementation

## Useful Links

- [Consultation Outcome Report](#) (DfC, Dec 2020)
- [Summary of Consultation Findings](#) (DfC, Dec 2020)
- [Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations – Consultation on Proposals](#) (DfC, Sep 2017)
- [Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations – Information Leaflet](#) (DfC, Sep 2017)
- Link to DfC [webpage](#) with all FRA documentation (incl. EQIA/RNIA)
- [Housing Selection Scheme Booklet](#) (NIHE, Jan 2023)
- [Housing Selection Scheme Rules](#) (NIHE, Jan 2023)
- [FRAProject@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:FRAProject@nihe.gov.uk)

**Housing**  
Executive

Marie Ward  
Chief Executive



Comhairle Ceantair  
**an Iúir, Mhúrn  
agus an Dúin**  
**Newry, Mourne  
and Down**  
District Council

Our ref: C/075/2023

15 March 2023

Dear Chief Executive

**Re: Notice of Motion – Reduction in Voting Age**

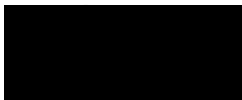
At a Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on 6 March 2023 the following motion was agreed:

*"Newry Mourne and Down District Council calls for the voting age of 18 to be reduced to 16 and if this motion is adopted seeks the support of the remaining councils in Northern Ireland to write to the Secretary of State calling him to amend the necessary legislation to enable 16 year old and upwards to vote."*

On speaking to the motion, many Members agreed this would be a positive way forward and would encourage young people, who are the future, to engage more fully in political life.

The proposer of the motion asked that the motion be circulated to the other 10 Council Chief Executives asking them to table at a future meeting of their Council.

Yours faithfully



**Marie Ward**  
**Chief Executive**



Alison McCullagh  
Chief Executive



Fermanagh & Omagh  
District Council  
Comhairle Ceantair  
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Our Ref: Democratic Services

Date: 28 February 2023

Email: [democratic.services@fermanaghomagh.com](mailto:democratic.services@fermanaghomagh.com)

Mr David Jackson  
Chief Executive  
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council  
66 Portstewart Road  
COLERAINE

Dear Chief Executive,

**Re: South West Acute Hospital**

At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 15 February 2023, Members asked that I write to you with regard to the WHSCT Public Consultation on the South West Acute Hospital (SWAH) and ask that your Council respond to the consultation in a positive manner and argue for the retention of the full suite of services at the Hospital.

The Council trusts you will give this issue due consideration and looks forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely



**Alison McCullagh**  
Chief Executive

### **1. Name**

The name of the Association shall be The National Association of Councillors Northern Ireland Region herein referred to as the Association.

*Mission Statement: -*

*The Association strives for the better governance of local communities within Northern Ireland by seeking to ensure that those who are elected to serve to the office of councillor are equipped, to the greatest possible extent, to discharge the many and varied responsibilities falling upon them.*

### **2. Aims and Objectives**

- To promote & represent civic leadership.
- To extend and strengthen the links between all Local Authorities, and to enhance friendship and co-operation.
- To address and understand matters of common and mutual interest.
- To facilitate the coming together of members on a regular basis.
- To promote equality of opportunity, combat discrimination and embrace diversity in both the work of the Association and its membership.
- To provide a forum for members to research, discuss and progress issues and a means whereby joint views may be formulated and expressed.
- To identify training needs of members, and solutions.
- To provide information on the Association to members, to ensure that they are afforded the opportunity to contribute to the Association's activities and to the development of policies.
- To promote the policies of the Association by providing information to local authorities, bodies representing local government, the public, the media, and outside organisations.
- To promote the status of members and to ensure adequate remuneration, pension rights and working conditions.
- To advocate measures which will remove barriers to serve as a councillor and encourage a diversity of candidates standing for election.
- To actively take part in consultations with the NI Assembly, when required.
- To maintain and develop the Association on a structured basis.
- To appoint elected representatives and officers, as appropriate.
- To develop relations with other organisations and bodies, as appropriate.

### **3. Membership**

Membership shall be open to all councils in Northern Ireland as corporate members. Each council shall appoint 8 delegates to attend NAC Member's Meetings. All delegates shall have voting rights.

#### **4. Executive Committee**

An Executive Committee shall be elected, in accordance with item 16, at the AGM and drawn from members who have been appointed by their council.

The Executive Committee shall conduct the ordinary business of the Association and meet on the first Monday of each month, unless agreed to postpone to a later date for a specific reason.

All meetings of the Executive Committee shall be summoned by not less than 4 days' notice in writing, or by email, specifying the business to be conducted there-at, save that, in the case of business which the chair of the meeting deems to be of urgent nature, any such business may be included on the agenda at any time prior to the commencement of the meeting.

A quorum of 2 Executive Committee members may summon an emergency meeting with 24 hours prior notice, this would be coordinated by the secretary who will contact each member of the Executive Committee with the meeting details, either orally or electronically. The quorum for an emergency meeting will be 5 Executive Committee members, preferably cross-party.

#### **Chair**

A Chair shall be elected at the AGM of the Association, in accordance with the party rotation formula at item 5 and serve for 2 years. Should the position fall vacant, a replacement shall be made by the party which held the position. Should the chair no longer be a member of the party holding the position, allocated in accordance with the rotation formula at item 5, the position shall automatically be declared vacant, and a replacement shall be made by the party.

#### **Senior Vice Chair and Junior Vice Chair**

A Senior and a Junior Vice Chair shall be elected at the AGM of the Association, in accordance with the party rotation formula at item 5 and serve for 2 years. Should either position fall vacant, a replacement shall be made by the party which held the position. Should either no longer be a member of the party holding the position the position shall automatically be declared vacant and a replacement shall be made by the party.

#### **Secretary**

A Secretary shall be elected every 2 years at the AGM of the Association. If the position falls vacant during the year, a replacement shall be made by the Executive Committee. The secretary of the Association will be the designated accounting officer, and the line manager for staff.

#### **Treasurer**

A Treasurer shall be elected every 2 years at the AGM of the Association. If the position falls vacant during the year, a replacement shall be made by the Executive Committee.

### **Women's Representative**

A Women's Representative shall be elected every year at the AGM of the Association, in accordance with the party rotation formula at item 5 and serve for 1 year. Should the position fall vacant, a replacement shall be made by the party which held the position. Should the Women's Representative no longer be a member of the party holding the position the position shall automatically be declared vacant and a replacement shall be made by the party. If no nominations are made the position will remain vacant.

### **Other Executive Committee Members**

- All parties represented in a NI council may appoint one other member to the Executive Committee at each AGM, provided the party has a member nominated by a council as a delegate. If no nominations are made the position will remain vacant.
- If a position falls vacant during the year, a replacement shall be from the party holding that position. If no nominations are made the position will remain vacant.
- If an Executive Committee member leaves the party they represent, the position shall be declared vacant, and a replacement shall be made from the party's members. If no nominations are made the position will remain vacant.
- Any individual elected as an Independent, and nominated by a council, may be appointed to the Executive Committee. If no nominations are made the position will remain vacant.
- If more than one Independent is nominated by council(s) they shall agree the one appointment to the Executive Committee.
- A member no longer in a party, after an election, shall not be regarded as an Independent for the Independent Executive Committee position.

## **5. Party Rotation for election of Officers and Women's Representative**

The positions of Chair, Senior Vice Chair, Junior Vice Chair, Women's Representative, UK Executive Member nominee and appointments to other bodies shall follow the rotation.

DUP ~ SDLP ~ APNI ~ SF ~ UUP

The rotation cycle shall continue from one council term to the next and altered with any additional political party representation to the Executive Committee.

## **6. Co-option Policy**

The Executive Committee may co-opt an elected member(s) with specific skills/knowledge to assist the NAC - there will be no voting, proposing or seconding rights.

## **7. Honoraria**

The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall be paid an honorarium monthly in arrears, amounts to be determined by the Executive Committee at the first meeting following an AGM.

**8. NAC UK Executive Committee**

Executive Committee members are eligible for election to the NAC UK Executive following nomination by the Executive Committee. Nominations shall be made in accordance with the party rotation formula at item 5.

**9. Appointment to Other Bodies**

Nominations shall be made in accordance with the party rotation formula at item 5.

**10. Finances**

The financial affairs of the Association shall be conducted under the financial regulations agreed by the Executive Committee and approved by full membership.

**11. Subscriptions**

The Association shall decide the rate of subscriptions at the AGM each year. Subscriptions shall be due before the 1 September each year.

**12. Financial Year**

The financial year of the Association shall end on 31 July each year.

**13. Audit**

The accounts of the Association shall be subject to an independent examination at the end of the financial year.

**14. Notice of Meetings**

A notice of an Annual General, an Extra-ordinary General Meeting or a Special Meeting shall be issued giving 7 days' notice. Meetings may be held by way of a virtual meeting due to a time of national emergency, such as a pandemic, or other event, which involves the application of social distancing.

**15. Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be open to all members of the Association and shall be held each year in the month of October, at such place and at such time as may be determined by the Executive Committee. If, due to a time of national emergency, such as a pandemic or other event, the Executive Committee may vary the month to hold the AGM.

**16. Procedure at the AGM**

- To receive the Minutes of the previous AGM.
- To receive a Report from the Secretary on activities of the Association during the preceding year.

- 
- To receive a Balance Sheet and Audited Statement of Accounts for the preceding financial year.
  - Bi-Annually elect a Chairman, a Senior Vice Chair, and a Junior Vice Chair.
  - Bi-annually elect a Secretary.
  - Bi-annually elect a Treasurer.
  - Every year to elect other members of the Executive Committee in accordance with item 5.
  - To deal with resolutions, showing the name of the Mover and Seconder and having been notified in writing to the Secretary 28 days prior to the AGM.
  - No other resolution, other than Motions of Procedure shall be permitted.
  - Voting at an Annual General, an Extra-ordinary General Meeting or a Special Meeting shall be restricted to the delegates nominated by their council.

**17. Extra-ordinary General Meeting**

An Extra-Ordinary General Meeting shall be called by the Executive Committee upon a written request from 5 Members and shall be held with 21 days from receipt of the request.

**18. Special General Meetings**

The Executive Committee may call a Special General Meeting if required to do so.

**19. Quorum**

The Quorum of an Annual General Meetings, an Extra-ordinary Meeting and a Special Meeting shall be 15 Members. Where a quorum has not been reached before 15 minutes of the scheduled start time the meeting shall not be held, and a further meeting shall be called within 21 days.

**20. Termination of Membership**

Membership of the Association shall cease where a council's subscription is 6 months overdue.

**21. Dissolution**

If at a meeting of the full membership, called for this purpose, a motion for the dissolution of the Association shall be passed by at least two thirds of Members, where at least 7 councils are represented at the meeting, the NAC Executive, and up to 2 appointed Senior Officers from 2 councils shall realise the assets and pay the liabilities of the Association as a Dissolution Group. The Group shall make arrangements whereby they shall distribute or discharge the Association's net assets or liabilities. Any remaining property or money shall be distributed in equal share to the 11 councils. Any outstanding balance shall be met by the 11 councils and administered by the Group.

**22. Amendments to the Constitution**

This Constitution may be amended at any time by the Association on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, if the recommendation is passed by at least two-thirds of the representatives present and voting at the quorate meeting of the Association.



**To: Council Chief Executives**

**Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG**

Telephone: (028) 90582 3346  
e-mail: [REDACTED]@communities-ni.gov.uk  
Our ref:  
Date: 24 March 2023

Dear Chief Executive

### **Council Remote/Hybrid Meetings**

Further to my letters of 25 March and 26 September 2022.

Section 78 (local authority meetings) of the Coronavirus Act 2020 contained provision to provide councils with the flexibility to hold meetings by remote or hybrid means during the Coronavirus emergency. This included an enabling power for the Department to make subordinate legislation regarding remote/hybrid meetings and the Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 were subsequently made and came into operation on 1 May 2020.

The expiry date of section 78 (Local Authority Meetings) of the Coronavirus Act 2020 was previously extended to 24 March 2023, thus allowing councils to continue to hold remote/hybrid meetings under the Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (NI) 2020.

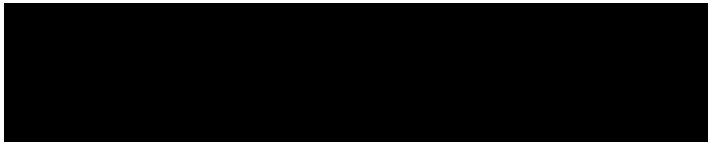
This was intended as an interim measure until such time as proposals for more permanent legislation, to be made under section 2 of the Local Government (Meetings and Performance) Act (NI) 2021, could be considered by a Communities Minister. In the absence of the Assembly, it is not possible to make regulations under the 2021 Act.

A further extension order has therefore been made to extend section 78 of the Coronavirus Act for a further 6 months, until **24 September 2023**. [The Coronavirus](#)



[Act 2020 \(Extension of Provisions Relating to Local Authority Meetings\) \(No2\) Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2023](#) was made on 23 March. As previously highlighted in my earlier letter of September 2022, an Order to extend section 78 of the Coronavirus Act is subject to the confirmatory procedure in the Assembly and, whilst it comes into operation once made, it will cease to have effect 40 days from the date of making unless it has been approved by resolution of the Assembly (the 40 day period does not include any time in which the Assembly is dissolved, in recess for more than 4 days or adjourned for more than 6 days). The Department will monitor the situation and keep councils informed.

Yours sincerely



**Anthony Carleton**  
**Director**  
**Local Government & Housing Regulation**