



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Northern Ireland Local Government Association
Date:	23 rd April 2010
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, RPA Project Coordinator (ext. 6202)

1.0	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>
1.1	<p>Members will recall that the Committee had previously agreed, at its meeting on 19th February 2010, that the Council would continue to engage with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association and that its subscription contribution for 2010/2011 would be based on the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. calculation of subscription payment would be based on population based and not penny rate product; and 2. that NILGA enter into an outcome based Memorandum of Understanding which would provide a framework for NILGA and the Council to work in a spirit of collaboration to deliver them
2.0	<u>Key Issues</u>
2.1	Council officers have been engaged in ongoing discussions with NILGA officials to progress the proposed development of an effective MOU. It has been suggested that such an approach be broadened and considered within the context of an overall route and branch review of the future role of NILGA and its relationship with its constituent councils including a strengthened performance framework.
2.2	Furthermore, the Chief Executive of NILGA has recently resigned to take up a new post as Director of the NHS Confederation and it would be the intention that this post will also be considered as part of a wider review of NILGA.
2.3	It is understood that the NILGA Office Bearers would intend to commission an independent review of the post of Chief Executive and set within the context of the potential future role of NILGA. It is also understood that NILGA would intend to establish a sectoral task group (with BCC representation) to oversee and input into this process.
2.4	Members will note that NILGA has requested the direct assistance and support from the Council, in terms of both procurement and HR advice, in progressing such work. In addition, NILGA has written to BCC party group leaders seeking bilateral meetings with its Office Bearers to enable wider information sharing and discussions on this issue.
	<i>NILGA Annual Plan and Subscriptions</i>
2.5	The Council has recently received correspondence from NILGA (copy attached at Appendix 1) which set out proposals in regards to its draft business plan for the period 2010/2011 and proposed increase in annual subscription. It should be noted that the business plan has been drafted in the context of the issues raised above and, therefore has a focus on strengthening relationships with councils, developing a customer focused approach to service delivery and has identified the need to review and redesign NILGA as a prioritised activity.
2.6	The business plan is also heavily focused on the role of NILGA in supporting the effective delivery of the RPA process and the modernisation of local government. Clearly, the degree of focus on such areas will be dependent upon whether or not the RPA progresses as currently scheduled. The business plan should therefore be a living document and subject to ongoing review.

Subscription Fee	
2.7	NILGA has also informed the Council that it has been agreed that its total annual subscription fee for the period 2010/2011 would increase by 2.5% (below inflation) rising from £373,613 in 09/10 to £382,972 in 10/11. NILGA have sought the amount of £106,627 from the Council based on a percentage of penny product. In keeping with the previous decision taken by the Committee at its meeting on 19 th February 2010 (i.e. that the Council's subscription payment would be based on population base and not the penny rate) this would equate to £76,500 (approx) for the Council.

3.0 Resource Implications

If agreed, payment of the NILGA annual subscription fee will be approximately £75,000.

4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i) note the contents of the foregoing report and appendix attached; and
- ii) agree that the Council continue its engagement with NILGA in regards to the development of a Memorandum of Understanding set within the context of a wider review of the future role of NILGA (refer to para. 2.1 above)
- iii) pay a subscription fee based on population base ie £76,500 for the coming year

5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Correspondence received from NILGA dated 18th March 2010