

Member Training

Provider/Course	Date & Time	Location	Costs	Attendee Requests
NILGA Leadership Programme for Councillor Development	Oct 2023 – May 2024	Various	Programme £675 Accreditation £540	
NILGA Local Planning Leadership Programme for Councillors	Nov 2023 - April	Various	Programme £364 Accreditation £258	
NILGA Audit Training	6 October 2023	Digital/Online	No Charge	Cllr McConnell

NILGA Accredited Learning Provision 2023-24 - Indicative Costs

NILGA Leadership Programme for Councillor Development 2023-24	
	20 Participants (Per Participant Cost)
Programme Cost	£675
Accreditation Cost	£540
Total Cost	£1215

NILGA Local Planning Leadership Programme for Councillors 2023-24	
	30 Participants (Per Participant Cost)
Programme Cost	£364
Accreditation Cost	£258
Total Cost	£622

Please note that these are total costs required per participant from each Council.

NILGA Leadership Development Programme for Councillors 2023-24

What is this programme about?

The NILGA Leadership and Development Programme provides a unique training and development experience for councillors in Northern Ireland to help them address the challenges of their role.

The programme is based on a tested and highly accessible model, which helps councillors to improve their understanding of:

- *Context*: how to adapt their leadership styles and practices to the context and challenges of their own place, people and systems.
- *Theory*: what knowledge, skills and capabilities they need to be effective, based on rigorous conceptual and theoretical frameworks.
- *Practice*: how to increase their personal resilience and improve their practical response to challenges.

The programme therefore enhances councillors' strategic leadership and decision-making skills, making more effective their Council role, community champion activities and 'personal brand'.

How will this programme benefit me?

The programme will help you to develop the practical skills necessary to be a more effective councillor, to highlight what roles you currently play and should look to play in the future, and to overcome the major challenges and barriers you face in playing these roles.

You will have the chance to catch up with the latest thinking on local government leadership and to develop new approaches to your work as a councillor.

The Programme is deliberately ambitious – it aims to enable you to take a strategic approach to identifying, balancing and addressing the needs in your local area and making more effective use of the assets of local residents, community groups, local business, your political party (if you belong to one) and the Council.

The programme is also designed to help you to deal successfully with the operational problems faced by your constituents. Case studies and discussions with visiting speakers who have directly relevant experience of the issues will introduce new approaches, so that you are assisted to think and act differently and have more impact in tackling the problems you face.

Finally, the programme is CPD-accredited, so upon completion you will accumulate CPD credits to demonstrate your achievement.

Programme of workshops

Date	Time	Venue	Module
Friday 20 th October 2023	1 – 4pm	In - person tba	Module 1: Programme Induction The Role of the Councillor
tba, November 2023	tba	Online / Digital	Module 2: Leadership of Your Area
tba, December 2023	tba	Online / Digital	Module 3: Leadership of Your Community
tba, January 2024	tba	Online / Digital	Module 4: Leadership with Partners – We’re All in This Together
tba, February 2024	tba	Online / Digital	Module 5: Leadership of Place
tba, March 2024	tba	Online / Digital	Module 6: Leading the Improvement of Outcomes
tba, April 2024	tba	Online / Digital	Module 7: Leading the Improvement of Efficiency and Service Delivery
tba, May 2024	tba	In - person tba	Module 8: Developing Your Future Leadership Role

What commitment will the programme entail from me?

You will be expected to attend eight 3-hour workshops over 8 months, beginning in October 2023. About one hour’s preparation is required for each workshop (reading a short article or blog and preparing the answer to some questions relevant to the session). You will then gain CPD credits for your attendance. In addition, you will get 12 extra CPD credits if you make a short presentation in one of the final workshops, focusing on how you are improving your leadership in line with the lessons you have learnt from the programme.

What other participants have gained

NILGA believes this programme brings major benefits for all participants. And previous participants agree here are some comments from councillors who participated in previous programmes:

“... More recently I have had the opportunity to participate in and complete the NILGA Leadership Programme 2021-22 and I would recommend it to all new councillors. It provides the opportunity to work with some excellent facilitators but also to hear and share with other councillors of varying levels of experience and with a wide range of backgrounds and interests.

It allowed me the time and space to think about how and what my council was doing and provided me with the tools to raise issues with officers and also to suggest solutions. It was clear also that councils don’t work in a vacuum and that there is a lot to be gained from building relationships and partnerships with fellow councillors, officers, and other statutory agencies.

I would highly recommend this course to all councillors, as it has been developed from a sound academic and practical background and contains information and insights which I have found invaluable over the past few years.”

“The programme has been brilliant from start to finish, I have learnt a lot from it and from that learning I can actually make better decisions and get more involved in my role as a Councillor as I no longer shy away from the big decisions.”

“The use of data sources and the approach of identifying key skills in people where I do not have the strength in such. Also, the continual developing and learning in myself has been a great asset in both council and my professional role.”

“I found the course informative, and it helped me to understand my role as a Councillor and leader in my community. It was also really good to hear experiences and tips from Councillors in other areas.”

“... pushed me to make me even more self-aware ..., especially of my leadership style and how best to utilise this in different groups and situations. Particularly the power of influence and not control!”

“As a newly elected councillor I am still very much learning in the role. Content in the Programme helped me gain a better understanding of process and how to achieve outcomes.”



NILGA Local Planning Leadership Programme for Councillors 2023-24

What is this programme about?

The NILGA Local Planning Leadership Programme provides a unique training and development experience for councillors in Northern Ireland involved in council planning committees to help them address the challenges of their role.

Since 2015, councils have responsibility for the following key planning functions:

- Local plan-making (Local Development Plan – LDP) – sometimes referred to as ‘forward planning’.
- Development management (excluding regionally significant applications)
- Planning enforcement

Councillors that sit on planning committees will be tasked with assessing the different benefits and impacts of planning applications, weighing up these considerations against regional policy and the policies published in your published local development plan (LDP). It is vital you therefore have a sound understanding of the planning system. The Programme is based on a tested and highly accessible model, which helps councillors in this regard.

The delivery of this programme will be interactive and interesting for Councillors allowing them to learn from case studies, ask questions regularly and to undertake role play in workshops. Delivery will include:

- *Short presentations using PowerPoint.*
- *Discussions*
- *Case studies and benchmarking practice in other jurisdictions.*
- *Workshops with role play.*
- *Question/answer sessions.*
- *Mock appeal.*
- *Handouts in paper form.*
- *Summary notes of discussions at each session and suggestions for further training.*
- *Optional study trip.*

The programme therefore enhances councillors’ strategic leadership and decision-making skills, making them more effective decision makers in their planning committee role, place shaping activities and overall competence in local development planning.

How will this programme benefit me?

The programme will improve your understanding of the plan making system and role in the process as civic leaders. It will enable you to participate effectively and take the lead in making robust and defensible decisions about the future of your council area.

You will have the chance to increase your understanding about what Council's priorities for statutory plan making could and should be. Participation will help in your role to ensure Council effectively manages the planning process and does not breach any statutory requirements or fail to get the plan through to adoption in a timely manner.

The programme will make the linkages, both statutory and practical, between community planning and the statutory local development planning being carried out by Councils and your strategic leadership role as a councillor. Further linkages with planning activities carried out by the Department for infrastructure and by Department for Communities at regional and local level will also be explained. As a result, councillors and their councils will be better enabled to demonstrate 'joined up' good governance and the delivery of planning and related activities in a holistic way.

Regarding development management, the programme will improve your understanding of the development management system, enhancing your strategic leadership decision-making capacity for the delivery of Council's planning objectives as set out in its policies, its emerging Local Development Plan and in regional guidance. Councillors will also have improved understanding of the enforcement process and when enforcement action is desirable.

The programme is also designed to help you reduce Council's vulnerability on appeal in the interests of minimising the possibility of award of costs at appeal, as well as Council's vulnerability in relation to maladministration of their planning powers.

The programme is deliberately ambitious in its aim to help to safeguard Council's reputation as responsible decision maker across a range of interrelated areas of local government.

The impact and success of the training will be monitored at an individual level through returned course evaluation forms and improved understanding demonstrated in workshops.

Finally, Councillors who successfully complete the entire course to a satisfactory standard will be credited with an Institution of Leadership and Management (ILM) Endorsed Award.

Programme of workshops

Date	Time	Venue	Module
Friday 17 th November 2023	2 – 4.30pm	In – Person tbc	Module 1: Understanding Plan Making and Role of Councillors Understanding the LDP process from draft stage to adoption.

15 th December 2023	2-4.30pm	Online /Digital	Module 2: How the Local Development Plan is Linked to Community Planning and Regeneration Activities
26 th January 2024	2-4.30pm	Online / Digital	Module 3: Understanding Development Management: The Planning Process and the Role of the Councillors Understanding Planning Conditions and Planning Agreements and the Role of the Planning Committee The Statutory Enforcement Process and the Role of the Planning committee
23 rd February 2024	2-4.30pm	Online / Digital	Module 4: Understanding the Statutory Appeal System
29 th March 2024	2-4.30pm	Online / Digital	Module 5: Maladministration charges to the Ombudsman and the Judicial Review of Planning
tba April 2024	Study Trip to the Republic of Ireland		Study Trip

What commitment will the programme entail from me?

You will be expected to attend five, two-hour and a half hour workshops over 5 months, beginning in November 2023. The programme also includes a study trip to the Republic of Ireland, which is optional.

At each workshop you will receive a workbook assessment sheet with some case studies and questions related to the workshop content. To achieve the ILM accreditation, you will be required to submit at least three of these workbook assessment sheets, completed to the required standard, by a date agreed with the course co-ordinator at the final workshop.

What other participants have gained?

NILGA believes this programme brings major benefits for all participants. And previous participants agree, here is a testimonial from a councillor who participated in previous programmes:

‘My first venture into representative politics was during the Local Government elections in 2001, when to my surprise and delight, I was elected to Fermanagh District Council. Since then, I have remained as a representative in local politics and now sit on the re-formed Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

Politics forms a large part of my working week, however when not engaged in the political arena, I am involved in the construction industry working in property as a quantity surveyor/project manager/property developer. Construction is a very fulfilling profession and I have been privileged to work on many projects over the years that have challenged and developed me on a personal level. The skills and core competencies developed through this

work have better equipped me for my role as a councillor, and I have developed an interest and expertise in related matters such as planning and land use.

NILGA as well as being the voice of Local Government also provide support and training modules for councillors. The recently developed ILM (Endorsed Award) NILGA Local Planning Leadership Programme has proved to be an excellent platform to enhance and widen the knowledge and skill base of participants. The interactive nature of the course allowed learning by instruction, participation and sharing of experiences by all of those involved. The content was pitched at the right level and covered the complete range of subject matter that councillors need to have knowledge of and be competent in. It highlighted the serious nature of the work and how it related to Community Planning.

I found that through participation in the course my own appreciation of and competence in the area of planning and related subject matter has greatly increased. For those wanting to broaden their horizons in planning it is a must do activity. I would recommend it to anyone as I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Looking forward the course has helped me to be more confident not only in planning matters but as a councillor in general, allowing me to better fulfil the role for my community.'

Cllr Robert Irvine

(Fermanagh and Omagh District Council)

NILGA amongst many other things, provides training support for councillors. I attended the ILM accredited NILGA Local Planning and Leadership Programme, which was excellent. Having previously had some knowledge of planning, this programme certainly enhanced and widened my knowledge of the subject. One of the modules was with a Planning Commissioner from the Planning Appeals Commission. I found this module to be extremely informative and overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the entire course and can wholeheartedly recommend the course to any councillor, especially those elected for the first time, if they are on the planning committee.

Cllr Thomas Gordon

(Mid and East Antrim Council)

For more information

The NILGA Local Planning Leadership Programme 2023-24, detailed prospectus is available on the NILGA Website. All interested parties can contact Fiona Douglas (f.douglas@nilga.org) to discuss further.

Calling all Audit Committee Councillors

Digital / Online,

Friday 6th October 2023

12.30 - 2pm

In the interests of good governance, financial sustainability and risk management, council audit committees play a vital role. Councillors meaningful participation, oversight and scrutiny on these committees are key to ensuring statutory obligations are met and challenges anticipated and mitigated against.

To fulfil this role, audit committee councillors need to scrutinise and challenge pertinent matters contained in numerous reports, which are presented to the Audit Committee. This involves having a good knowledge and grasp of the issues and feeling confident to scrutinise and challenge where needed.

In collaboration with the Local Government Auditor, NILGA is coordinating a lunchtime session for councillors involved in audit committees.

Delivery of this session will be interactive, allowing councillors to learn by asking questions regularly and recounting their own experiences. Learning and discussions will be relevant to the councillor unique role and participation aims to improve understanding of what audit committee oversight and scrutiny is, why it's important, how to do it and what support is available.

**Hosted by NILGA with support from the LGTG
(Local Government Training Group), these FREE events are open to all
Elected Members.**

Interested members contact Fiona Douglas: f.douglas@nilga.org

Disclaimer

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Appendix B

Approval – Conferences – September 2023

Retrospective Approvals

Details of Conferences	Service/ Directorate	No. Attending	Cost	Date	Location
Royal Inst of Chartered Surveyors	Environment	1	£180	5 th Sept 2023	Belfast
NI Annual Planning Conference	Planning	4	2 X £115 1 X £90 1 X Free	6 th Sept 2023	Belfast
Site Visit to Sweden (AS Unit & Bus Refilling Gas Station)	Environment	1	Travel Subsist	19 th Sept – 21 st Sept 2023	Sweden

Approvals

CIPFA NI Annual Conference	Corporate Services & Finance	1	£245+vat	24 th October 23	Belfast
Centre for Better Ageing	Health, Leisure & Wellbeing	1	Free	22 nd November 23	London
Public Procurement Conference	Corporate Services & Finance	2	£189+vat	19 th October 23	Belfast
APSE Energy Scottish Summit	Chief Executive's	1	£272+vat + flights	3 & 4 th October	Glasgow
Irish Planning Institute	Planning	1	E 180	6 th October	Online