



Welcome to March 2025 edition of LGSC Ezine...

This edition of the Ezine showcases the Commission's ongoing efforts and key initiatives within the local government sector.

This Ezine has a focus on:

- Diversity Ambassador Programme
- BOOST II Mentoring Programme
- Talent Management Pilot Opportunity - Mental Toughness
- Local Government 2025 Awards

Please note that from 1 April 2025 the Commission offices will relocate to 217 Formation Works, Meadow, 22 East Bridge Street, Belfast, BT1 3NR.

**Bumper Graham,
Chairperson**

Contact details for Commission Officers...

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Inside...

2



Diversity Ambassador Programme ...

3



Talent Management Pilot Opportunity - Mental Toughness...

4



Local Government 2025 Awards...

Diversity Ambassador Programme...



Equality & Diversity
in Local Councils

Over the past 15 months, the Commission has facilitated five Diversity Ambassador events. Following the wrap-up event on 27 November 2024, the network has appointed a Co-Chair role to lead its initiatives.



The appointed Co-Chairs are:

- **Elected Member Representative:**
Cllr Noeleen Hayes, Fermanagh and Omagh DC
- **Officer Representative:**
Catherine Christy, Belfast CC

The Co-Chairs, in collaboration with the Commission who will provide Secretariat support, will work together to guide the network's direction.

The dates for the upcoming Diversity Ambassador meetings are:

- **Wednesday 14 May 2025**
- **Wednesday 15 October 2025**
- **Wednesday 11 February 2026**

The Co-Chairs encourage each Council area to contribute to the programme by rotating the responsibility of hosting the meetings. This will help ensure a diverse spread across all Council areas.

BOOST II Mentoring Programme...

As part of the regional Talent Management Strategy, the Commission, in partnership with Solace and supported by LGTG, has launched the BOOST II Mentoring Programme for Directors. Designed to foster professional growth, knowledge sharing, and career development, the programme aims to support leadership within local government.

The expression of interest for participation opened in November 2024, with the official launch event taking place on Friday 17 January 2025. A total of 20 mentoring relationships have been established, creating a valuable learning and support network for mentees. The programme will run for 9 to 12 months, providing guidance, collaboration, and mentorship to support leadership development in local government.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk



Talent Management Pilot Opportunity - Mental Toughness...



The Commission, in partnership with SOLACE and PPMA, acknowledges the importance of continuously exploring innovative and impactful strategies to address the challenges faced by senior leadership teams in local government. These challenges include developing leadership talent and responding to the dynamic nature of public service.

In response, the Commission is supporting organisations in undertaking a pilot programme focused on Mental Toughness for senior leadership teams, with consultancy support provided by Anne McMurray Development Ltd.

The goal of the pilot programme is to help both newly established and more experienced senior leadership teams reset and refresh their leadership approach, enhance teamwork, and build resilience in the face of ongoing change. The programme aims to address common challenges, such as:

- *External disruptions*
- *Balancing short-term and long-term performance*
- *Transformation fatigue*
- *Navigating the political landscape*
- *Media and social media scrutiny*



The pilot programme will offer leadership teams tailored support to effectively tackle these challenges, with a focus on:

- *Improving understanding of leadership roles, managing change, and problem-solving*
- *Inspiring hope and purpose among staff during times of uncertainty*
- *Providing individual benefits such as enhanced self-awareness, self-regulation, mental toughness, and emotional resilience*

Each programme is bespoke and tailored to meet the specific needs of the participating team, with the format and duration co-designed by the organisation and support provider.

Ultimately, the aim of the pilot is to empower senior leadership teams to 'survive and thrive' in a rapidly evolving environment, leading with resilience and adaptability.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk



Local Government 2025 Awards...



Equality & Diversity
in Local Councils

The Commission, on behalf of the Equality and Diversity Working Group, proudly sponsored the Local Government Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Award.

Open to all 11 Councils, this award recognised excellence in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, with a focus on:

- *Organisational Commitment*
- *Goal Setting*
- *Implementation and Monitoring*
- *Challenges Overcome*
- *Engaging a Wider Audience*
- *Evaluation and Review*

The standard of applications was exceptionally high, demonstrating the dedication and commitment of Councils to fostering inclusive practices. With such strong contenders, selecting an overall winner proved to be a challenging task for the panel.

The Commission is pleased to announce the winner of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion award for 2025:

**Mid and East Antrim BC -
Autism Friendly Borough
Initiative**



**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council

Runner-Ups:

**Armagh City, Banbridge
and Craigavon BC -
Inclusive ABC**



**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council

**Causeway Coast and
Glens BC - Disability
Hate Crime**



**Causeway
Coast & Glens**
Borough Council

***Congratulations to all the finalists for
their outstanding efforts in championing
equality, diversity, and inclusion!***

Local 2025 G★overnment Awards

Health and Wellbeing Group...

This group, which comprises representatives from each of the 11 Councils, NI Housing Executive and a representative from the Stay Well Portal provider work together for health and wellbeing initiatives for employees, elected members and local communities.

In support of the group, the Commission offered financial support of £200 per organisation to host an event.

The following Councils/NIHE availed of this funding:

- *Antrim and Newtownabbey BC – Exercise Mats for Staff Classes*
- *Ards and North Down BC – Taster Session Kayaking*

- *Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon BC – Menopause Day*
- *Belfast CC – Parents Emotional Health*
- *Derry City and Strabane DC – Substance Misuse Training for Leisure Staff*
- *Fermanagh and Omagh DC – Menopause Day*
- *Mid Ulster DC – Cancer Focus*
- *NIHE – Mental Health First Aiders Training.*



AWARENESS * SUPPORT * KNOWLEDGE

Statutory Duty Network Group...

This group, which comprises of the Equality Officers from each of the 11 Councils, NI Housing Executive and a representative from the Equality Commission, meet quarterly. The group work together on all Section 75 related issues and other issues that arise within Councils in relation to equality.

For December's meeting, the Commission facilitated a session in collaboration with the

Department for Communities, providing members with an overview of the draft Sign Language Bill.

For March's meeting, the Commission facilitated a briefing and discussion session on the Programme for Government Wellbeing Framework.

https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/executiveofficeni/pfg_wellbeing_dashboard.html

Neurodiversity in the Workplace Guidance...

The Commission is developing a Neurodiversity in the Workplace Guidance for local government. This guidance will be issued for consultation in due course.

If you would like to be added to our consultee list, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk

Do you have an article on a HR or OD Initiative that you'd like to publish in this newsletter?

If you would like to have an article published, please contact Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk

