



# Welcome to September 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:

- *BOOST II Mentoring Programme.*
- *Diversity Ambassador Programme.*
- *Talent Management Pilot Opportunity - Mental Toughness.*
- *Neurodiversity in the Workplace Guidance Document.*
- *Call Off Framework for:*
  - *Accredited Workplace Mediation Services*
  - *Independent Persons for Investigations and Dispute Resolution*
  - *Independent Persons to Facilitate the Performance Appraisal System for Chief Executives.*

- *Research Programme in partnership with Ulster University on Recruitment and Retention in local government in Northern Ireland.*
- *Staywell Portal.*
- *SkillGate e-Learning Training – Local Government Chief Executive Appraisal Panel Training.*

**Bumper Graham,  
Chairperson**



## Inside...

2



**Diversity Ambassador  
Programme...**

3



**Talent Management  
Pilot Opportunity –  
Mental Toughness...**

4



**Academic Research  
Programme...**

# BOOST II Mentoring Programme...

The BOOST II Programme for Directors has been running since January 2025 and is expected to continue for approximately 9 to 12 months. It is designed to offer guidance, foster collaboration, and provide mentorship to support leadership development within local government.

To date, 20 mentoring relationships remain active, with positive feedback received throughout the programme.

Since its launch, several Councils have appointed new Directors, both from within and outside the local government sector. If you would like any of these newly appointed Directors to participate in the programme, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer, at [paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)



# Diversity Ambassador Programme...

Kindly hosted by Mid Ulster District Council, the Diversity Ambassador Network met on Wednesday 14 May 2025.

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Agree the Terms of Reference for the Diversity Ambassador Network.
- Explore the current Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) landscape within local government.



Equality & Diversity  
in Local Councils

- Identify shared strengths and areas for improvement.
- Begin developing a practical action plan, including measurable goals and 3 key areas of focus.

The workshop centred on shaping a meaningful and achievable action plan. Discussions focused on setting goals across 3 levels:

- **Individual level** – empowering Diversity Ambassadors in their role.
- **Council level** – embedding EDI more effectively within organisational structures.
- **Collaborative level** – fostering shared goals and learning across Councils.

Participants proposed a range of ideas and priority areas, which will form the foundation of an action plan to be refined in future sessions.

The next workshop is scheduled for Wednesday 15 October 2025 and will be hosted by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at [paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)

# Talent Management Pilot Opportunity – Mental Toughness...

**Six Councils are taking part in the Mental Toughness for senior leadership teams, with consultancy support provided by Anne McMurray Development Ltd.**

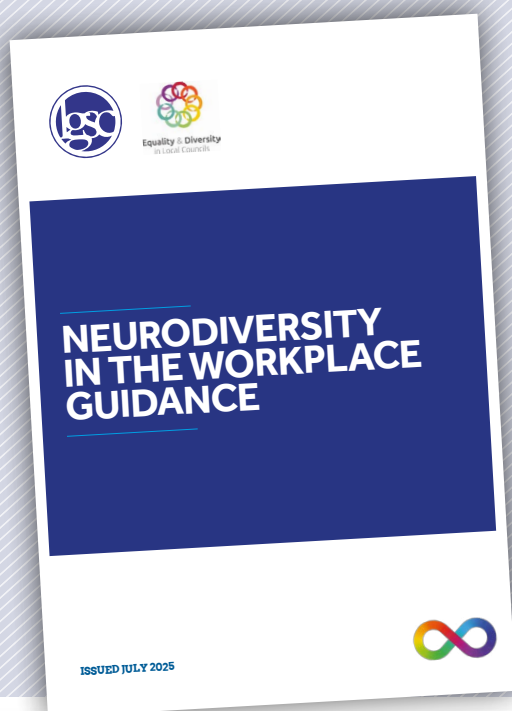
Each programme is bespoke and tailored to meet the specific needs of the participating team, with the format and duration co-designed by the organisation and support provider.

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](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)



## Neurodiversity in the Workplace - Guidance Document...



**In partnership with key stakeholders — including the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Labour Relations Agency, and Employers for Disability NI — the Commission has developed and circulated a Neurodiversity in the Workplace Guidance Document to Councils and the NIHE.**

The purpose of this guidance is to affirm Councils' and the NIHE's commitment to promoting equality and fairness, while recognising and valuing the neurodiversity that exists within our local communities.

Please note that this document is intended as a guidance document only. Councils and the NIHE are welcome to adopt it in its current form or use it to inform and enhance their own internal policies and practices.

In line with the guidance document, the Commission is considering the development of an e-learning training module based on its content.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at [paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)

# Call Off Framework...

**The Commission has worked with a range of experienced individuals and organisations — including former Chief Executives, APSE, SOLACE, and other independent providers to refresh and update our Call-Off Framework for the following services:**

- Accredited Workplace Mediation Services.
- Independent experts for Investigations and Dispute Resolution.

- Independent facilitators for the Chief Executive Performance Appraisal process.

These refreshed Call-Off Frameworks are available to support Councils and the NIHE, providing access to experienced professionals as needed.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at [paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)

## Academic Research Programme in partnership with Ulster University on Recruitment and Retention in local government in Northern Ireland...

**The Commission, in partnership with SOLACE NI, is undertaking an academic research programme to explore and evaluate talent management practices within Northern Ireland's Councils.**

This research aims to provide valuable insights into the current employment landscape in Northern Ireland and examine its impact on Councils as employers. It will also address key worker shortages and explore potential solutions.

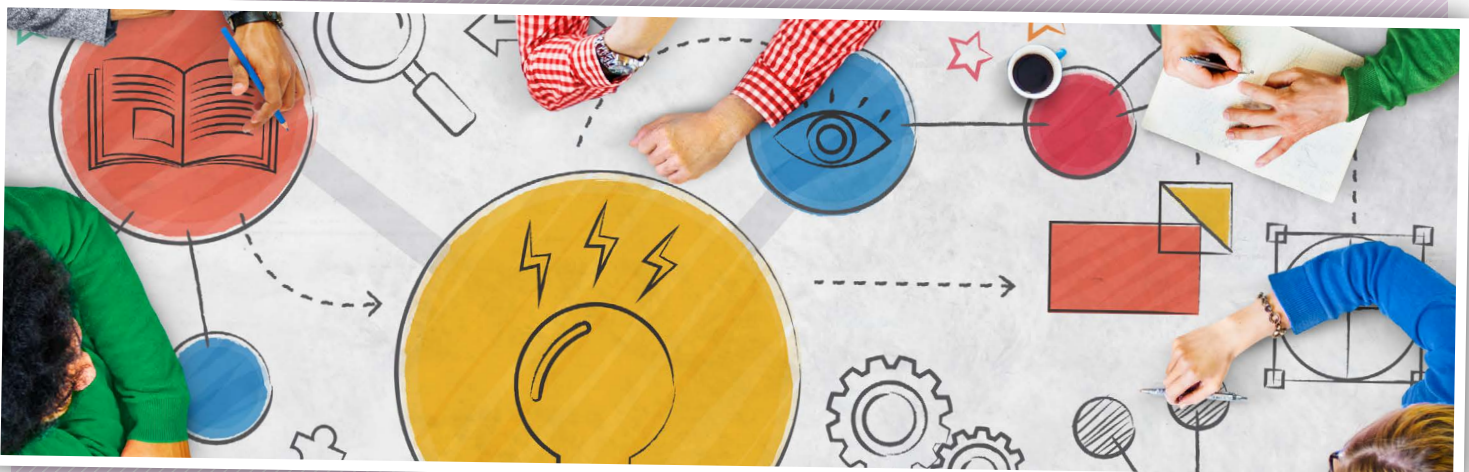
The research will begin in September 2025 and will involve several forms of methodologies:

- *Literature Review: A comprehensive review of academic and sector-specific literature on skills shortages and workforce capacity in local government.*

- *Qualitative Research: Interviews and focus groups with HR professionals from Councils to gather in-depth insights and experiences.*
- *Quantitative Analysis: Surveys issued to HR professionals and managers to collect data on perceptions and realities of workforce capacity and skills gaps within local government.*
- *Case Studies: In-depth studies of selected Councils to provide detailed, context-specific analysis of workforce capacity challenges and their effect on organisational performance.*

This research will support a deeper understanding of current challenges and help inform strategic workforce planning across local government.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at [paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)



# Staywell Portal...



**The Commission has overseen the procedures and management of the current arrangement with the StayWell provider (WellHub), which is offered to employees by 10 of the 11 Councils and the NIHE. Formal notification was received from WellHub stating that it will cease operations in Northern Ireland on 31 August 2025.**

In response, the Commission conducted a procurement exercise to appoint a new provider to continue the service until the Commission's dissolution on 31 March 2027. The contract was awarded to The Well Collective, a newly established company formed by the original founders of

StayWell. As such, it will offer a like-for-like service to the Councils and NIHE.

The Commission has been actively engaging with representatives from each Council and the NIHE regarding the transition to the new portal, as well as supporting them in planning how the service will be communicated and rolled out to their employees.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at [paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)

## SkillGate – e-Learning Training for Local Government Chief Executive Appraisal Panel Training...

**In line with the Local Government Chief Executive Appraisal Best Practice Guidelines 2024, the Commission is developing an e-learning training module, to be hosted on Councils' Skillgate platform. This training is designed to support Councils in establishing a robust and fair process for appraising their Chief Executive.**

Developed alongside the *Best Practice Guidelines 2024*, this e-learning training module is intended to support Elected Members, the Chief Executive, and the Facilitator in agreeing on a fair and consistent process for appraising the Chief Executive's performance.

The module is expected to be available on Skillgate by 30 September 2025.

For more information, email Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer at [paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk)



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