

Association of Irish Local Government **ACTIVITY REPORT** **2025**





Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council



Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co. Laois



Leitrim
County Council
Comhairle Chontae Liatroma



CARLOW
COUNTY COUNCIL



WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae na hIarmhí



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council



AN LONGFORT
Comhairle Chontae An Longfort
Longford County Council
CONNECTED
People. Places. Opportunities.



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council



Kilkenny County Council
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh



Comhairle Contae
an Chabháin
Cavan
County Council



Comhairle Contae
Loch Garman
Wexford
County Council



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council



Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Council



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council



Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe
Galway City Council



Comhairle Contae Chiarraí
Kerry County Council



Comhairle Contae County Council



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford City
& County Council



Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Luimnigh
Limerick City
& County Council



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo
Mayo County Council



Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

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Foreword from the President

As President of the AILG, I am pleased to present the AILG Annual Activity Report for 2025 – a year of significant transition, sustained advocacy and renewed focus on the future of local democracy.

This report reflects the collective work of the Association across two Presidential and Executive terms, and it is important to acknowledge that many of the achievements outlined were shaped by continuity of purpose and shared commitment across that period. I wish to recognise the leadership and contribution of my predecessor, Cllr Kieran O’Hanlon, and the outgoing Executive Committee, whose work during the first half of the year helped to set the strategic direction and momentum that continued throughout 2025.

The year was defined by a pivotal national context for local government. The publication of a new Programme for Government, the establishment of the Local Democracy Taskforce, and growing pressures on councillors in terms of workload, safety and public expectation all underscored the urgency of reform. Against this backdrop, AILG continued to act as a strong, credible and constructive voice for councillors, ensuring that democratic representation at local level remained central to national decision-making. One of the most significant developments of 2025 was the establishment and commencement of the

Local Democracy Taskforce, a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address long-standing structural issues within Ireland’s local government system. AILG’s sustained advocacy ensured meaningful councillor representation on the Taskforce and recognition of the Association’s policy and research work as a key input to its deliberations. This progress reflects the collective voice of councillors across the country and the importance of working together to secure lasting reform.

Throughout the year, the Association also achieved tangible progress on issues of immediate concern to councillors. Notably, sustained engagement with Government resulted in significant improvements to the Councillor Security Allowance, representing an important acknowledgement of the risks faced by elected members and the need to support them in carrying out their public duties safely.

Alongside advocacy, AILG has continued to invest in supporting councillors through training, education and engagement. Through the delivery of comprehensive induction programmes, targeted governance training, and the development of accredited learning pathways – including the launch of the Maynooth University micro-credential in spatial planning – we demonstrated a sustained commitment to enhancing the professionalism, confidence and effectiveness of elected members throughout every stage of their mandate.

“At a time of increasing complexity and scrutiny, councillors continue to serve as the essential democratic link between communities and the institutions of the State.”

Engagement with members remained central to the Association’s work. Through direct engagement at plenary meetings, nationwide communications initiatives and ongoing consultation, councillor experience and insight continued to inform AILG’s priorities and positions. This member-led approach remains one of the Association’s greatest strengths.

As the year progressed and I took on the role of President, I was struck by the dedication, resilience and sense of public service demonstrated by councillors across the country. At a time of increasing complexity and scrutiny, councillors continue to serve as the essential democratic link between communities and the institutions of the State.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the AILG Officers and National Executive, the Plenary delegates, and the AILG staff team, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the Association’s effectiveness. I also wish to pay tribute to our outgoing Director, Mr Liam Kenny, whose decades of service have left a lasting legacy within the Association and the wider local government sector.

I look forward to continuing this work alongside my fellow officers and the Executive Committee for the remainder of my tenure as President. I’d like to sincerely thank them for their support to date and we look forward to renewing our efforts to advance the Association and achieve meaningful progress for our members into the new year.

Looking ahead, AILG will continue to engage constructively with Government, sectoral partners and our members as the work of the Local Democracy Taskforce moves towards a conclusion. Our focus remains on strengthening local democracy, supporting councillors, and ensuring that local government is equipped to meet the needs of communities now and into the future.

I commend this report to you as a record of a year marked by progress, partnership and purpose, and I thank all councillors for their continued commitment to public service.

Is mise le meas,

Mary Hanna

Councillor Mary Hanna Hourigan
AILG President 2025-26



Report of the Executive Director

Tommy Moylan

“While the President’s Foreword reflects the AILG’s representative and political leadership, this overview focuses on the strategic, organisational and operational developments underpinning the Association’s work during the year.

The year 2025 marked an important period of consolidation and strategic positioning for the AILG. Building on strong foundations, the Association focused on strengthening organisational capacity, enhancing service delivery to members, and positioning AILG to play a central role in shaping the future of local government reform.

2025 also represented a significant moment of transition, with the retirement of our long-serving Director, Mr Liam Kenny, following almost three decades of dedicated service. Liam’s leadership, institutional knowledge and unwavering commitment to local democracy have shaped the Association in profound ways, providing a strong and stable platform on which current and future work continues to build.

Building Organisational Capacity

A key strategic priority during the year was strengthening the AILG’s internal capacity to meet the growing demands placed on it by members, Government and sectoral partners. As the role of councillors continues to expand and the reform agenda accelerates, it is essential that AILG is appropriately resourced to support elected members effectively.

The appointment of a new staff member at the end of 2025 represented a strategic investment in enhancing communications, training coordination, member engagement and policy support. In 2026 AILG will also invest in additional staff resources with the planned recruitment of a Researcher, Policy Development and Advocacy Officer, a Training and Education Officer and a Participation and Diversity Officer. This substantial investment in staff resources will ensure an enhanced support for our members and position AILG at the heart of our local government sector.

Strengthening Service Delivery to Members

Enhancing our service delivery to councillors has remained central to AILG’s strategic focus. Throughout 2025, the Association worked to ensure that advocacy, training, communications and engagement were delivered in a more integrated and responsive manner, grounded in direct engagement with members and aligned closely with councillor priorities.

Positioning AILG for Reform and the Local Democracy Taskforce

The establishment of the Local Democracy Taskforce in June 2025 represented a significant once in a generation opportunity for local government reform, and 2025 was a critical year in positioning AILG to engage effectively with this process. Considerable organisational effort was invested in supporting the councillor taskforce representatives, coordinating

“AILG’s ultimate goal is to place councillors at the heart of local democracy, ensuring they have the authority, resources and respect required to perform their roles effectively.

input across thematic pillars, and ensuring that AILG’s research, policy analysis and member perspectives informed the reform agenda. This work has reinforced AILG’s role as both a representative body and a strategic policy organisation.

Looking Ahead

As the Association looks ahead, strengthened organisational capacity, an expanded staff team and enhanced systems of engagement provide a solid platform to support councillors through this next phase of local government reform.

AILG will continue to invest in its people, partnerships and structures to ensure it delivers effectively for members while upholding the values that have defined the Association over the past decade. I would like to acknowledge the support and engagement of the President, National Executive, Plenary delegates and staff team throughout the year, and to recognise the enduring contribution of Liam Kenny, whose legacy continues to inform and strengthen the AILG’s work.

As always, Association’s ultimate goal is to place councillors at the heart of local democracy, ensuring they have the authority, resources and respect required to perform their roles effectively. As the national voice of local government, the AILG remains committed to strengthening representation, advancing advocacy and supporting councillors in meeting the needs of their communities.

I look forward with confidence to the opportunities ahead and to continuing to work with members to strengthen local democracy and public representation across Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

Tommy Moylan

AILG Executive Director

Our Role and Functions

The Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) is a national representative body that proudly represents and supports local democracy.

With 950 members, AILG focuses on developing, supporting and promoting the important work of city and county councillors across the island of Ireland and helping them to respond to changes and challenges in local government.

The AILG is one of the longest established representative bodies in Ireland, and we liaise closely with other stakeholders in the local government environment to ensure that the contribution of Ireland's democratically elected councillors is appreciated in government departments and throughout the full range of public agencies.

Mission Statement

The AILG is a national representative body that proudly represents and supports local democracy. We the elected councillors provide a strong voice for local communities through effective local government.



Advocate



Support



Promote

Our Responsibilities

- Protect & promote democratic local government
- Lobby for improved supports for councillors
- Achieve greater influence for local government and our member local authorities
- Provide training, resources and support to councillors to meet their legislated responsibilities
- Facilitate continuous improvement for local government
- Build the profile and enhance the status and reputation of city & county councillors in Ireland

Programme of Work

As a membership organisation, we have a duty to deliver to our members on business objectives which have been set and agreed by our Executive Board and Plenary Council.

Our programme of work is central to the day-to-day activities of AILG and their achievement is key to the realisation of our overall vision and mission. In our 2025 Activity Report we report within the following pages on these key programme areas:

1. **Advocacy & Policy**
2. **Training & Education**
3. **Communications**
4. **European Engagement**

Structure, Governance and Management

The AILG is governed under both the 2001 and 2014 Local Government Acts, following a merger of the two previous national representative bodies after the 2014 local government reforms.

The Association is structured on each of the 31 local authorities nominating three delegates to AILG (93 delegates in total) for the full 5 year-term of any local election period. We have 3 staff members.

AILG Committees

Officers and Executive Committee

The **Officer Board** comprises of our President, Vice President and Past President.

The **President & Vice President** are elected each year by Plenary Delegates at the association's AGM and are responsible for implementing and delivering the strategy and policies of AILG, in conjunction with the Executive Committee and Management Team.

Officers 2025 - 2026

- Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan, President
- Cllr. Paddy O' Rourke, Vice-President
- Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, Past President

Executive Committee Members 2025-2026

- Cllr. Séan Ó' hArgáin
- Cllr. Nick Killian
- Cllr. Audrey Buckley
- Cllr. Tommy Cahill
- Cllr. Fintan Brett
- Cllr. Noel Keelan
- Cllr. Joe Hannigan
- Cllr. Pat Nugent
- Cllr. Pat Kennedy
- Cllr. Noel Cribbin

The **Finance Committee** is responsible for all matters relating to financial planning and budgeting, resource and expenditure management, financial monitoring and reporting to the Executive Committee.

Finance Committee Members 2024 - 2029

- AILG Officer Board
- Cllr. Tom O' Callaghan
- Cllr. Declan McDonnell

The **Audit Committee** has an independent oversight role in advising AILG on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and Audit matters, as part of the governance arrangements that operate within AILG.

Audit Committee Members 2024 - 2029

- AILG President
- Kate Feeney (Independent Chair)
- Cllr. James Byrne
- Cllr. Dermot Lacey
- Cllr. Tom Farrell

Compliance and Accounting

The Association maintains high standards of compliance and corporate governance, with externally prepared accounts audited by the Local Government Auditor.

2025 at a glance

Successfully secured significant increase in the Councillor Security Allowance, with the lifetime cap raised to €10,000

In 2025, our training programme delivered 35+ online events, engaging over 3,146 councillors and sector representatives

Launched a new NFQ Level 8 accredited micro-credential in Spatial Planning in partnership with Maynooth University.



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MEDIA MENTIONS
AND INTERVIEWS

Secured support from Government to rollout the Women's Regional Caucus Network across Ireland.



successfully secured significant councillor representation on the Taskforce, alongside formal recognition that AILG's policy and research work would inform its deliberations.

Commenced nationwide Communications and Engagement Roadshow, engaging directly with councillors in local authorities across the country.

Played a leading role in the delivery of Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) induction and SPC Chair training, in partnership with the DHLGH and IPA

Signed a 3 Year memorandum of Collaboration in partnership with NILGA to support the interests of elected members and local government across the island of Ireland.

Signed a Friendship Agreement with the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities, strengthening international solidarity and cooperation.

Media Coverage secured across national, regional & online outlets, including RTÉ, Newstalk, The Irish Times, Irish Independent.

D'éirigh linn méadú suntasach a bhaint amach ar an Liúntas Slándála do Chomhairleoirí, agus an uasteorainn saoil ardaithe go €10,000

In 2025, cuireadh ar fáil breis is 35 imeacht ar líne faoinár gclár oiliúna, agus ghlac breis is 3,146 comhairleoir agus ionadaí eárnála páirt iontu

Seoladh cúrsa nua sa Phleanáil Spásúlachta i gcomhar le hOllscoil Mhá Nuad. Cúrsa micridhintiúr creidiúnaithe atá ann, agus é ar Leibhéal 8 ar an gCreat Náisiúnta Cáilíochtaí.

 **150**

LUA AGUS
AGALLAMH SNA
MEÁIN

Fuarthas tacaíocht ón Rialtas chun Líonra Réigiúnach Cácas na mBan a rolladh amach ar fud na hÉireann.

5

D'éirigh linn ionadaíocht shuntasach a fháil do chomhairleoirí ar an Tascfhórsa, chomh maith le haitheantas foirmiúil go gcuirfeadh obair bheartais agus thaighde an Aontais bonn eolais faoin bplé.

I gcomhar leis an Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht agus leis an bhForas Riaracháin, bhí ról lárnach againn in oiliúint ionduchtúcháin agus oiliúint chathaoirleachta a chur ar fáil i dtaca le Coistí um Beartais Straitéiseacha.

Cuireadh tús le Seó Bóthair Cumarsáide agus Rannpháirtíochta d'fhonn bualadh go díreach le comhairleoirí in údarais áitiúla ar fud na tíre.

Síníodh Meabhrán Comhoibrithe 3 bliana le Cumann Rialtais Áitiúil Thuaisceart Éireann d'fhonn tacú le leasanna na gcomhaltaí tofa agus an rialtais áitiúil ar fud oileán na hÉireann.

Fuarthas clúdach sna meáin chumarsáide náisiúnta, réigiúnacha agus ar líne, lena n-áirítear RTÉ, Newstalk, The Irish Times, Irish Independent.

Síníodh Comhaontú Cairdis le Cumann Uile-Úcránach na bPobal Críche Cónasctha d'fhonn dlúthpháirtíocht agus comhar idirnáisiúnta a neartú.



AILG Advocacy & Policy Programme

AILG Policy & Advocacy Programme

In 2025, AILG delivered a sustained and strategically focused Policy and Advocacy Programme at a pivotal moment for local government. Against the backdrop of a new Programme for Government, increasing demands on councillors and renewed attention on democratic reform, the Association worked to ensure that the role, authority and voice of elected members remained central to national policy development.

The programme was guided by a clear set of priorities informed by member engagement, commissioned research, and the Association's General Election Manifesto, *Building Stronger Local Government*. Key priorities included restoring councillor powers, strengthening municipal governance, improving financial autonomy, enhancing training and supports, and ensuring councillor voices were central to national reform processes.

Programme for Government Engagement

Early in the year, AILG published a targeted policy paper setting out key local government measures for inclusion in the Programme for Government. This paper distilled ten priority areas into a concise briefing for policymakers, focusing on councillor powers, governance reform, funding autonomy, diversity, training and the future role of local government.

AILG engaged directly with Ministers, political parties and senior officials throughout the Programme for Government negotiations,

consistently advocating for recognition of councillors as democratically elected decision-makers and for meaningful reform of Ireland's highly centralised local government system.

Local Democracy Taskforce – AILG Leadership, Representation, and Reform

A central and defining focus of AILG's work in 2025 was the establishment and operation of the Local Democracy Taskforce. The Taskforce represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform and strengthen Ireland's system of local government, with the role, authority and support of elected members placed at the centre of its mandate.

AILG played a decisive role in shaping both the creation of the Taskforce and its terms of reference. Through sustained engagement with Government and opposition representatives, the Association successfully advocated for a structured, time-bound process to examine the democratic, financial and functional foundations of local government, and for meaningful councillor representation within its membership. This engagement ensured that the Taskforce was explicitly aligned with commitments in the Programme for Government, the constitutional status of local government under Article 28A, and the principles of subsidiarity set out in *Putting People First*.

Following its establishment under the auspices of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Taskforce commenced an extensive programme of work structured around four thematic pillars: Governance and Accountability, Structures, Functions, and Funding. From the outset, AILG's research and policy work was formally recognised as informing the Taskforce's deliberations. Key reference documents included AILG's *Building Stronger Local Government* policy

AILG Advocacy & Policy Programme

proposals and the Maynooth University research report *The 21st Century Councillor in Irish Local Government*, alongside Council of Europe monitoring reports and parliamentary committee findings.

Throughout 2025, AILG worked closely with councillor representatives participating across all four pillars. This involved extensive preparatory work, structured coordination with the Local Authorities Members Association (LAMA), ongoing engagement with senior officials, and continuous consultation with members. AILG placed particular emphasis on ensuring that councillor experience and lived local knowledge informed each stage of the Taskforce's work, from initial analysis through to the development of emerging options and recommendations.

By the end of 2025, the Taskforce had progressed from diagnosis to decision-making. Each pillar completed detailed "as-is" assessments, issues and options papers, and draft recommendations, with a growing focus on prioritisation, implementation pathways and system-wide coherence. Emerging themes across the pillars included the need to reaffirm the policy-making role of elected councils, rebalance governance relationships between councillors and the executive, strengthen municipal district and sub-county governance, enhance local financial autonomy and oversight, and establish a more structured national–local engagement framework.

A consistent thread throughout the Taskforce's work was the recognition that meaningful reform requires sustained investment in councillor capacity, training and support. Proposals under consideration include

strengthened training frameworks, access to accredited CPD, improved research and policy supports, and enhanced administrative assistance for elected members. These themes align closely with AILG's long-standing advocacy on councillor professionalisation, safety, diversity and retention.

At the time of writing and as the Taskforce reaches its final phase, AILG has intensified engagement with members to ensure that councillor perspectives continued to shape both the final recommendations and the approach to implementation. This has included briefings, structured feedback mechanisms and preparatory work to support councillor engagement with the next stages of reform.

The work of the Local Democracy Taskforce represents the most comprehensive and structured review of local government in over a decade. For AILG, 2025 was a year of sustained leadership, coordination and advocacy to ensure that this reform process is grounded in democratic principles and delivers tangible improvements for councillors and communities alike. The Association remains fully committed to ensuring that councillors are central to the reform agenda and that local democracy in Ireland emerges stronger, more effective and better equipped to meet future challenges.

AILG Advocacy & Policy Programme

Political Engagement and Ministerial Deputations

Throughout the year, the Association undertook a series of formal deputations and high-level meetings to ensure that councillor perspectives were clearly represented in national decision-making, particularly in the context of housing delivery, planning reform and the evolving role of local government.

In April 2025, AILG President Cllr. Kieran O’Hanlon led a delegation to Leinster House for a substantive meeting with the Minister for Housing, James Browne TD. The meeting focused on the erosion of councillor powers, housing and planning challenges, and the practical barriers facing councillors in exercising oversight at local level. Minister Browne, a former councillor and AILG delegate, acknowledged the growing imbalance between elected members and executive authority and reaffirmed his commitment to restoring councillor powers, in line with the Programme for Government.

The delegation raised specific concerns regarding zoning and rezoning processes, including delays in bringing serviced land forward for housing and the limited influence of councillors despite their detailed local knowledge. The Minister outlined proposals to issue Section 28 directives directly to local authorities in order to streamline zoning processes and accelerate housing delivery. The meeting also addressed councillor retention and safety, with AILG strongly advocating for enhanced security supports in recognition of the increasing demands and risks associated with the role.

Earlier in the year, AILG also met with Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, John Cummins TD, at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. This first formal engagement following his appointment provided an opportunity to outline AILG’s key priorities, including the Local Democracy Taskforce, councillor pay and non-pay supports, and the continued rollout of the Women’s Regional Caucus Network. The meeting reinforced the importance of ongoing, structured engagement between AILG and the Department throughout the council term.

These deputations formed part of AILG’s broader strategy of constructive political engagement, ensuring that councillors’ experience, concerns and proposals informed national policy development and the emerging programme of local government reform.

Councillor Safety, Security and Supports

Councillor safety remained a critical advocacy issue throughout 2025, reflecting increasing incidents of harassment, intimidation and threats directed at elected members. AILG led a sustained and ultimately successful campaign to reform the Councillor Security Allowance, engaging with Ministers, senior officials and An Garda Síochána.

This advocacy resulted in a significant increase in the Security Allowance, with the lifetime cap raised to €10,000 and reimbursement increased to 100% of eligible costs following a Crime Prevention Officer assessment. AILG welcomed this outcome as a major step forward in recognising the risks associated with public office and supporting councillors in carrying out their roles safely.



Left: AILG delegation, led by Cllr Kieran O'Hanlon, Immediate Past President, pictured at Buswells following a meeting with Minister James Lawless TD to present AILG's Vision for Local Government and to advocate for the inclusion of key AILG policy recommendations in the next Programme for Government.

Bottom: AILG Delegation pictured outside Leinster House in January 2025.

L-R: Cllr. Mick Cahill, Cllr. Mary Hoade, AILG Executive members 2024-25, Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, Immediate Past President, Cllr. Jimmy McClearn AILG VP 2024-25, & Cllr. Anne Colgan, AILG Executive member 2024-25.



AILG Advocacy & Policy Programme

Remuneration, Conditions and Retention

AILG continued to advocate for improved remuneration and conditions for councillors, highlighting the link between adequate supports, democratic effectiveness and retention. During the year, the Department confirmed increases to councillor remuneration and revised gratuity arrangements under updated regulations.

These developments were consistently framed by AILG as part of a broader need to modernise the councillor role, ensure work-life balance, and make local government a sustainable and accessible form of public service.

Stakeholder and Inter-Agency Engagement

In parallel with direct Government engagement, AILG maintained strong working relationships with key sectoral partners, including the County and City Management Association (CCMA), the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC), An Garda Síochána, and international counterparts.

Regular bilateral meetings and joint engagements ensured that councillor perspectives were represented across policy discussions and that opportunities for collaborative reform were actively pursued.

Greater Participation and Diversity

Promoting greater diversity and participation in local government remained a key priority for AILG throughout 2025. Central to this work was a sustained focus on strengthening the participation of women in local politics and ensuring that structural supports were put in place to widen access to local democratic representation.

During the year, AILG secured Government support and a formal commitment in the new Programme for Government to support the rollout of a Women's Regional Caucus Network, building on the success of the initial pilot initiative led by AILG.

This national advocacy was complemented by AILG's engagement at international level. In 2025, AILG President Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan represented the Association at the Second International Meeting of Elected Women, organised by the Fons Mallorquí de Cooperació in Mallorca, Spain. The conference brought together elected women, institutional representatives and governance experts from across Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Mediterranean to examine strategies for strengthening women's leadership and participation in local politics.

AILG's participation reflected growing international recognition of the Association's work in promoting diversity and inclusion within local government. The President contributed to discussions on the Women's Regional Caucus pilot and AILG's wider advocacy through the Local Democracy Taskforce to strengthen the role and voice of councillors as local policy-makers and democratic leaders. The conference also provided an opportunity to engage with partner organisations, including See Her Elected and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, highlighting a shared commitment across the island of Ireland to widening access to local public life.

A key outcome of the meeting was a collective proposal to establish a transnational alliance connecting women's caucuses and leadership networks across regions and countries, aimed at supporting peer learning, mentorship, policy exchange and inclusive leadership.

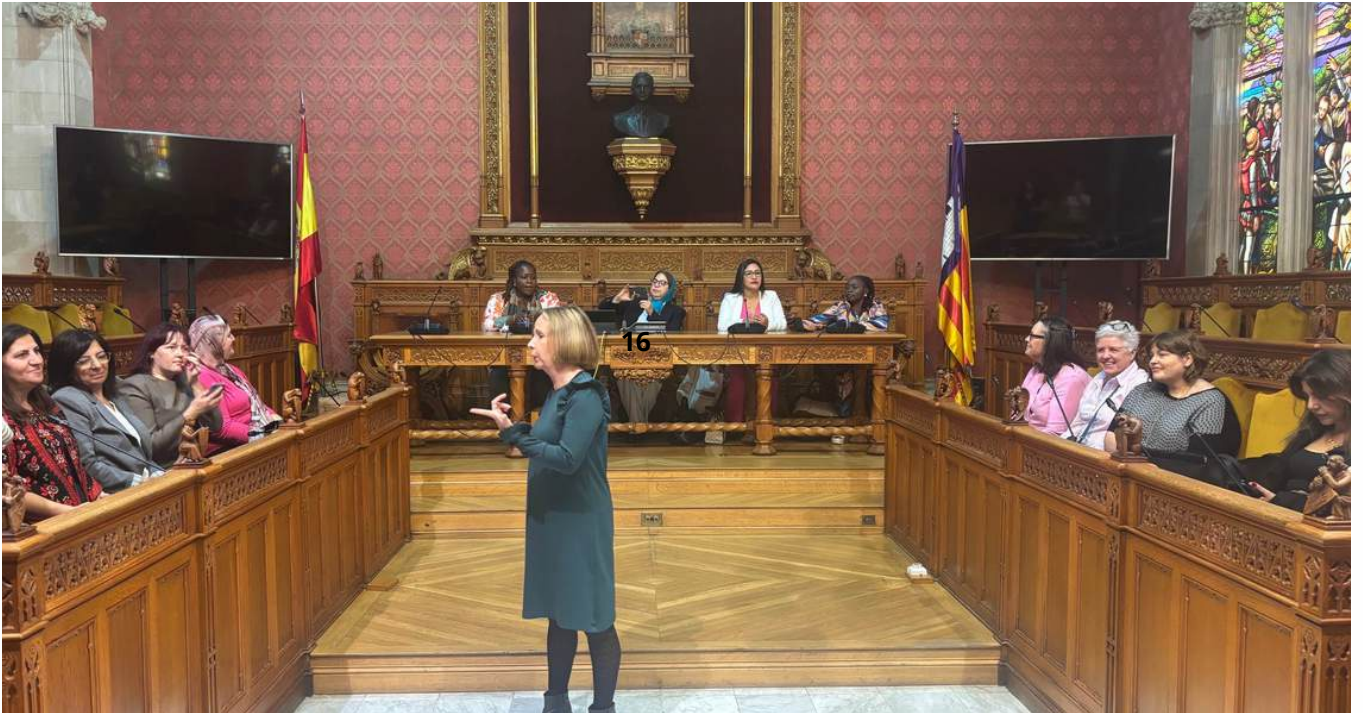
Local Democracy Taskforce Engagement - In pictures



Local Democracy Taskforce Engagement - In pictures



ALLG Participation at the International Meeting of Elected Women in Mallorca, Spain - In pictures





Above: AILG Deputation with Minister James Browne T.D, Minister for Housing, 23rd April 2025 to discuss critical issues facing local government and housing policy on behalf of councillors nationwide.



L-R: Minister James Browne T.D, Minister for Housing, Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25, Cllr. Jimmy McClearn AILG VP 2024-25, Mr. Liam Kenny, AILG Director, Cllr. Mary Hoade, Cllr. Mick Cahill and Cllr. Anne Colgan, AILG Executive Members 2024-25.

Bottom Left: Minister James Browne T.D, Minister for Housing pictured with Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25.



Top Left: AILG delegation led by Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25 pictured at Customs House with Minister John Cummins, Minister of State for Local Government & Planning, on Tuesday 25th February, 2025.



Above: L-R: Tommy Moylan, AILG Director, Cllr. Joe Fox, AILG Executive Member 2024-25, Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25, Cllr. Jimmy McClearn, AILG VP 2024-25, Cllr. Anna Grainger, AILG Executive Member 2024-25.



Left: Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25, Mr. Liam Kenny, AILG Director and Ms. Elaine Lynch, AILG Head of Operations, pictured alongside representatives from Coimisiún na Meán, Women for Election, and the Houses of the Oireachtas Service at the annual An Garda Síochána forum focused on the safety of elected representatives held on 17th June, 2025.



Middle: Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan, AILG President 2025-26 pictured with Catherine Connolly, 10th President of Ireland, at her inauguration at Dublin Castle on November 11, 2025.



Bottom left: Ms. Elaine Lynch, AILG Head of Operations, pictured participating at a panel discussion at the AIR Conference in Athlone in February 2025.

AILG-NILGA 3 Year Memorandum of Collaboration Signing - In pictures





Top Left: (L-R): Miriam McDonald, NOAC board member, Pauline Mulligan, CEO of LGMA, Cllr Kieran O'Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25, Michael McCarthy, Chair of NOAC pictured at Kilkenny Castle for NOAC Good Practice Seminar in March 2025.

Top Right: Cllr. O' Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25 pictured with John Hogan, Chair of IPB in February 2025.

Below Left: Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan pictured with Senator Mark Daly, Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann, and Verona Murphy TD, Ceann Comhairle of Dáil Éireann at the National Bravery Awards held in Leinster House on 5th December 2025.



AILG European Engagement

AILG European Engagement

Congress of Local & Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

European engagement continued to play an important strategic role in AILG's work during 2025, strengthening Ireland's contribution to international discussions on local democracy, governance and human rights, while ensuring that the experience of Irish councillors informed European policy development. Through active participation in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE) and targeted international partnerships, AILG ensured that Irish councillors were not only represented, but influential, respected and listened to within key European democratic forums.

AILG's engagement at European level is grounded in a clear objective: to advance strong, democratic and empowered local government in Ireland by drawing on European norms, shared experience and international best practice. Participation in European institutions provides Irish councillors with an authoritative platform to influence policy debates, benchmark Ireland's local government system against European standards, and reinforce national reform efforts through international legitimacy.

AILG's European engagement during the year also marked an important moment of transition, with recognition of the long-standing contribution of outgoing Director Liam Kenny, who served as Secretary to the Irish Delegation to the Congress for almost three decades.



Above: Cllr. Jimmy Moloney, Head of the Irish Councillor delegation to CLRAE, speaking at the 48th Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, held in Strasbourg in March 2025.

His leadership and institutional knowledge played a central role in establishing and sustaining Ireland's presence and reputation within the Council of Europe. Responsibility for this role has since transferred to Executive Director Tommy Moylan, ensuring continuity in AILG's engagement at European level.

AILG European Engagement

Influencing European Policy and Democratic Standards

Throughout the year, AILG supported and coordinated the work of the Irish Delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE), ensuring a consistent and strategic contribution to debates on local democracy, governance, human rights and citizen participation.

Irish councillors made substantive interventions on issues including the balance of power between elected councils and executive structures, the protection of democratic institutions, the role of local government in addressing housing challenges, and the safeguarding of voluntary and community independence. These contributions positioned Ireland as a constructive and credible voice within European discussions on democratic reform.

AILG also played a key role in follow-up engagement with the Council of Europe's Monitoring Committee regarding Ireland's compliance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government. This engagement ensured that concerns raised by the Council of Europe regarding centralisation and councillor powers were directly connected to the work of the Local Democracy Taskforce at national level.

International Leadership and Reputation of Irish Councillors

Irish councillors continued to demonstrate leadership and expertise within European forums during 2025, reflecting the high regard in which Ireland's local government representatives are held internationally.

Members of the Irish delegation undertook significant leadership roles, including rapporteurships, committee vice-chair positions, keynote contributions and election observation missions. Notably, Irish councillors led and participated in election monitoring missions and policy forums addressing citizen engagement, electoral integrity and democratic participation.

These roles reinforced Ireland's reputation as a committed advocate for democratic values, transparency and strong local governance, while providing Irish councillors with direct insight into innovative practices and governance models across Europe.

The Irish Delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE) in Strasbourg also took time during the 49th Plenary Session in October 2025 to pay an important heartfelt tribute to Mr. Liam Kenny, who retired after almost three decades of service as Secretary to the Irish Delegation.



Left: AILG Director Liam Kenny presenting parting gift to Irish Ambassador Caitriona Doyle from the embassy on his final trip to Strasbourg in his capacity as Secretary to the Delegation of Ireland to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.



Middle L-R: Cllr. Kieran O'Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25, Michael O'Brien, CLRAE Irish Honorary Member, Irish Ambassador Caitriona Doyle, Head of Irish Delegation Cllr. Jimmy Moloney, Councillors & Delegation members Gbnait Moynihan, John Crowe, Sean O'Brien, and AILG Executive Director, Tommy Moylan.



Bottom Left
Cllr. Kieran O' Hanlon, AILG President 2024-25 and Mr. Liam Kenny, AILG Director pictured with Ukrainian Ambassador, Ms Larysa Gerasko to signal support for Ukraine.



An AILG and Irish CLRAE Delegation pictured with members of the Council of Europe Monitoring Team and senior Department officials at the Customs House in May 2025 to follow up on their 2023 report on strengthening local democracy and aligning Ireland with European norms of local self-government.



Bottom Left

Irish CLRAE Delegation; Liam Kenny, Cllrs John Crowe, Gbnait Moynihan, Ann Colgan and Jimmy Moloney at the final domestic meeting of their five-year term in Maynooth Co. Kildare.



Bottom Right

AILG and members of the Irish Delegation to the Council of Europe Congress met with Tánaiste Simon Harris to present the Summary Report on the Irish delegation's work throughout the 2021–2025 mandate on 25th November 2025.

AILG European Engagement

Strategic Partnerships and International Solidarity

A defining feature of the AILG European engagement programme in 2025 was the strengthening of international partnerships rooted in democratic solidarity and shared values.

The formal signing of a Friendship Agreement between AILG and the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities marked a significant milestone in international cooperation. This agreement established a framework for long-term engagement, peer learning and support between Irish and Ukrainian local authorities, particularly in the context of reconstruction, governance reform and democratic resilience. In parallel, AILG continued to build strong relationships with European and regional local government associations, contributing to dialogue on participation, equality, housing and governance reform, and ensuring Irish councillors remain connected to wider European networks.

Bottom Right

AILG's historic Friendship Agreement with the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities (AUATC), marking a deepening of international solidarity and cooperation between the Irish and Ukrainian local government sectors.

Supporting National Reform Through European Engagement

European engagement during the year was closely aligned with AILG's national policy and advocacy objectives. Comparative European experience and standards were consistently used to support arguments for devolved powers, strengthened municipal governance, enhanced councillor supports and clearer democratic accountability within Ireland's local government system.

This alignment strengthened AILG's credibility in domestic advocacy, reinforcing the case that reform of local government in Ireland is not only desirable, but consistent with established European democratic norms.





AILG Training & Education Programme

AILG Training & Education Programme

In 2025, AILG delivered an extensive and evolving Training and Education Programme designed to support councillors in carrying out their roles with confidence, professionalism and effectiveness. The programme responded directly to the increasing complexity of local government, ongoing reform discussions, and the growing expectations placed on elected members as community leaders, policy-makers and decision-makers. Programme development was informed by a feedback from our Training Needs Analysis member survey, national policy reform, and the findings of AILG's commissioned research on the evolving role of the councillor.

Induction and Core Governance Training

A core priority for AILG in 2025 was ensuring that councillors—particularly newly elected and co-opted members—were supported through structured induction and governance training. Induction programmes focused on local government structures and functions, the respective roles of elected members and the executive, statutory plans, meeting procedures, financial oversight, and audit processes.

AILG also played a leading role in the delivery of Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) induction and SPC Chair training, in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Institute of Public Administration, Public Participation Networks and other stakeholders. This training strengthened the capacity of SPCs to fulfil their policy development role and enhanced collaboration between councillors and council staff.

Leadership, Oversight and Specialist Skills Development

Beyond core induction, AILG delivered targeted training to strengthen councillors' leadership, governance and oversight capabilities. This included governance and oversight programmes supported by our training sponsor IPB Insurance, focusing on areas including statutory obligations, ethics, financial accountability and risk management.

Specialist training was also provided to support councillors in personal development areas such as communications and public engagement. Professional video content workshops enabled interested members to develop practical skills in communicating effectively with constituents and the wider public, reflecting the growing importance of digital engagement in local democracy.

Annual Training Conference and Seminars

AILG's Annual Training Conference remained a cornerstone of the Training and Education Programme in 2025, bringing together councillors from across the country for collective learning, discussion and engagement.

Centred on the theme 'Local Government for the Next Generation', the conference provided a national forum to examine the Programme for Government, the Local Democracy Taskforce, and the future role of local government. High-level contributions from Ministers, Mayors, senior officials, academics and practitioners ensured that councillors were directly engaged in discussions shaping the reform agenda.

In addition to the Annual Conference, AILG delivered seasonal seminars and workshops which provided opportunities for focused training, peer learning and consultation with members.

AILG Training & Education Programme

Accredited and Advanced Education Pathways

A significant focus of AILG's Training and Education Programme in 2025 was the continued expansion of accredited and advanced learning opportunities for councillors, reflecting the increasing complexity of the policy and governance environment in which elected members operate.

During the year, AILG continued its partnership with University College Cork (UCC) in supporting and sponsoring the Climate Crisis and Local Government programme. This course, specifically designed for city and county councillors, remains the only university credit-bearing CPD programme of its kind in Ireland. The programme is designed to inform, challenge and empower councillors, supporting informed leadership on climate action while providing participants with an accredited qualification. The next intake of councillors commenced the 12-week QQI Level 7 certificate programme in February 2025.

Building on this work, AILG further expanded its accredited education offering through a new partnership with Maynooth University, launching an NFQ Level 8 micro-credential in spatial planning tailored specifically for elected members. This programme responded directly to the increasingly complex planning and legislative environment in which councillors operate and supports confident, informed engagement with development plans, planning policy and statutory frameworks.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate AILG's commitment to strengthening councillors' capacity through structured, accredited learning, and to supporting the professionalisation of the councillor role through high-quality partnerships with academic institutions.

Partnerships and Programme Delivery

The successful delivery of the Training and Education Programme was underpinned by strong partnerships with key stakeholders, including Government Departments, academic institutions, sectoral bodies and specialist providers. These partnerships ensured AILG training content remained relevant, high-quality and aligned with national reform priorities, while also supporting consistency and best practice across the local government sector.

Through its Training and Education Programme in 2025, AILG strengthened councillors' capacity to exercise oversight, contribute to policy development, engage effectively with communities and navigate the demands of public office.

The programme supported councillors at all stages of their mandate and laid important foundations for future training aligned with the outcomes of the Local Democracy Taskforce and wider reform of local government.

AILG Elected Member Training Programme 2025 - In pictures



AILG Elected Member Training Programme 2025 - In pictures



AILG Training & Education Programme

AILG Training & Education Programme 2025

Training Programme Overview

In-person modular programme

- Six-module national programme delivered across the year
- Focused on governance, planning, climate action, emergency response, inclusion and local authority finance
- Delivered through flagship events including the Annual Conference and Autumn Seminar
- Expert input from Government Departments, regulators, sectoral bodies and practitioners

Webinar training series

- Rolling programme of online briefings and skills-based sessions
- Covered planning, housing, climate action, AI and digital skills, emergency management and accessibility
- Designed to maximise access and flexibility for councillors

Accredited CPD Pathways

- Credit-bearing professional development programmes delivered in partnership with higher education institutions
- Included a QQI Level 7 programme on climate leadership with University College Cork and the launch of a new NFQ Level 8 micro-credential in spatial planning with Maynooth University
- Supported deeper engagement with complex policy and governance areas through recognised qualifications

Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) induction

- National induction programme for SPC members
- Delivered in partnership with DHLGH, DRCD, PPNs and the IPA
- Focused on legislative frameworks, governance, ethics, policy development and decision-making

AILG Training & Education Programme

AILG Training & Education Programme 2025



Training & Education – 2025 at a Glance

3146

3146 attendees over 35 Training events in 2025

14

Total number of online training webinars delivered to our Members between Jan 2025 - December 2025

1363

Total attendance across online AILG briefings and skills-based webinars

612

Total number of participants who attended our Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) induction and specialised SPC Chair training events in 2025.

36

36 councillors enrolled in accredited university CPD programmes (24 in the Maynooth University micro-credential and 12 in the University College Cork programme)

AILG Annual Conference 2025 - In pictures



AILG Annual Conference 2025 - In pictures



AILG Autumn Training Seminar 2025 - In pictures



AILG Autumn Training Seminar 2025 - In pictures





AILG Communications & Engagement Programme

AILG Communications & Engagement Programme

In 2025, AILG's Communications and Engagement Programme played a central role in strengthening the Association's connection with councillors, amplifying the collective voice of elected members, and supporting delivery across advocacy, training and policy priorities. The programme focused on two-way engagement, visibility of impact, and ensuring that councillors remained informed, heard and represented at local, national and international levels.

Communications and Engagement Roadshow

A flagship initiative of the Communications Programme in 2025 was the commencement of the nationwide Communications and Engagement Roadshow. The Roadshow was designed to strengthen direct engagement with councillors through attendance at plenary meetings in local authorities across the country, reinforcing two-way communication between members and the Association.

During 2025, Roadshow engagements were delivered in seven local authorities, with the remaining visits scheduled to take place throughout 2026. These engagements provided councillors with updates on AILG's policy influence, training supports and advocacy outcomes, including progress on councillor security, remuneration and the work of the Local Democracy Taskforce.

Equally important, the Roadshow created structured opportunities for open discussion, feedback and the identification of emerging issues facing councillors at local level. Insights gathered through these engagements directly informed AILG's policy positions, training development and engagement with Government and sectoral partners, reinforcing the Association's commitment to being a member-led organisation.

Media Engagement and Public Advocacy

AILG continued to engage proactively with national media throughout the year to advocate for local government and challenge narratives that underestimated the role of councils and councillors. Media appearances by the AILG President and senior representatives ensured that councillor perspectives were represented in public debate on key issues such as housing delivery, local democracy and public accountability.

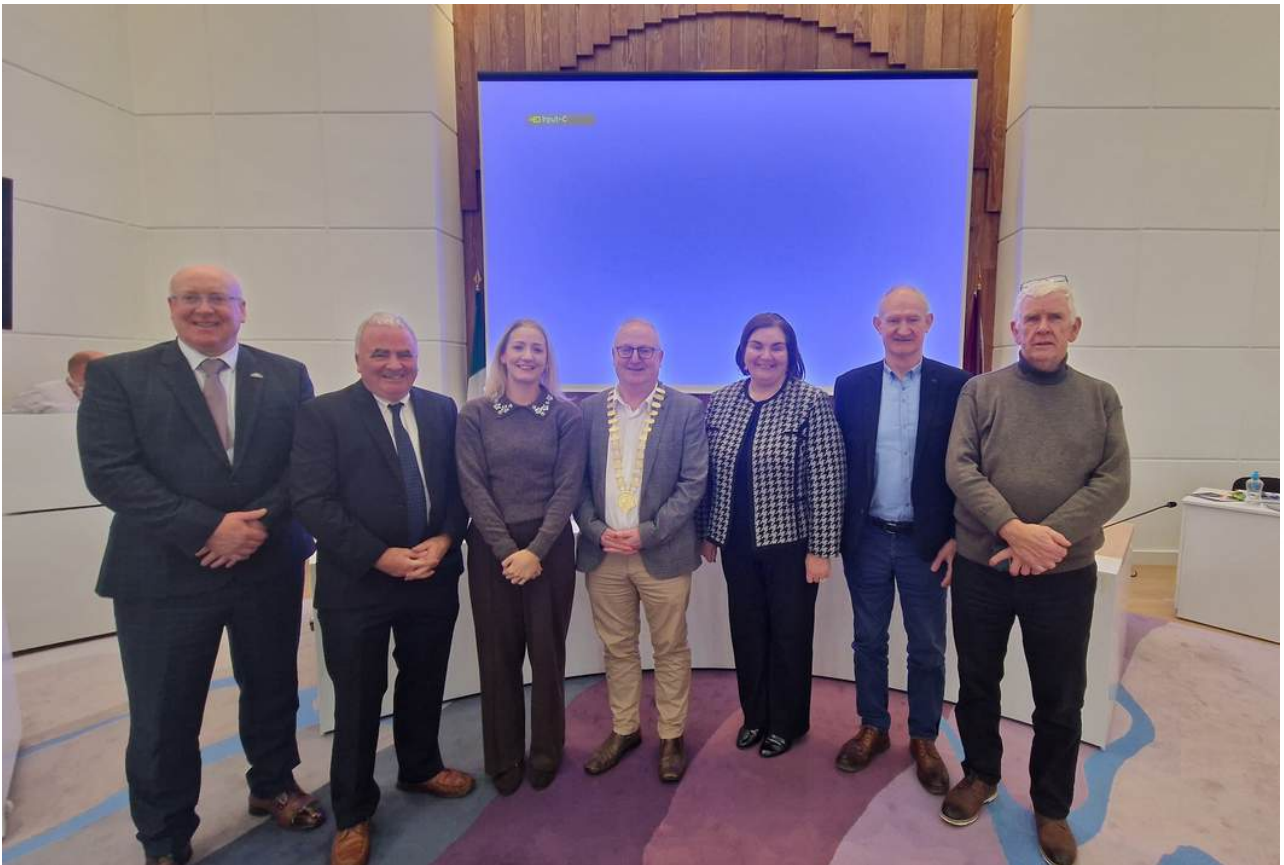
This media engagement supported AILG's broader advocacy objectives by highlighting the important role of local elected members, the impact of centralisation, resource constraints and structural barriers on local government performance, while reinforcing the need for reform.

Major outlets such as RTÉ Drivetime, Newstalk, The Irish Times, Irish Independent, Business Post, and Irish Examiner featured AILG on various local government-related topics, alongside strong representation in regional, and online media throughout the year.

AILG Communications and Engagement Roadshow 2025 - In pictures



ALG Communications and Engagement Roadshow 2025 - In pictures



AILG Communications & Engagement Programme

Media Presence and Communications Summary

Media engagement during 2025 supported AILG's advocacy priorities and its role as the national voice of councillors, with coverage focused on local democracy, housing, councillor supports and reform.

During the year, AILG recorded 150 media mentions, delivering an estimated total reach of approximately 20.7 million across national and regional media outlets. Media activity was aligned with key organisational priorities, including engagement on councillor security and remuneration, housing and planning reform, and the work of the Local Democracy Taskforce.

While overall media volume was more targeted than in previous years, engagement remained focused on reinforcing AILG's credibility as a representative body and ensuring councillor perspectives were reflected in public discourse on local government reform.

AILG continued to use a mix of digital channels, media engagement and direct communications to support member engagement and advocacy throughout 2025.

Media Engagement – 2025 at a Glance



150

*Media mentions
and interviews*

- 20.7 million estimated reach
- Coverage across national and regional outlets
- Focused on advocacy and local democracy reform

In Memoriam



Cllr. Anthony Waldron

The untimely passing of Cllr Anthony Waldron (IND) in 2025 was a significant loss to the people of Roscommon and to local government nationally. A former AILG Plenary delegate and member of the Association's Executive Committee, he was widely respected as a committed and community-focused public representative.

First elected to Roscommon County Council in 2004, and re-elected in 2019 and 2024, Cllr. Waldron was a strong advocate for rural communities and played a leading role in a number of local development and tourism initiatives. His dedication to public service and his contribution to community life will be fondly remembered.

AILG extends its sincere sympathies to his family, friends, councillor colleagues and the people of Ballintubber.



Cllr. Bill Chambers

Bill Chambers, former Clare County Councillor and Mayor of Clare, sadly passed away in August 2025 following many years of dedicated public service.

First elected in 1985, Bill represented the people of Cooraclare and West Clare for almost four decades, serving with commitment and integrity until his retirement in 2023. He served as Mayor of Clare in 2016 and made a lasting contribution to his community through his advocacy on local infrastructure and development.

Bill will be remembered for his dedication to public service and his strong connection to the communities he represented. AILG extends its sincere sympathies to his family, friends, former council colleagues and the wider West Clare community.



Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy

The passing of Cllr Patrick Gerard Murphy in September 2025 was a profound loss to the people of West Cork and to local government more broadly. A long-serving councillor with Cork County Council, he was widely respected for his integrity, dedication and deep commitment to public service.

First elected in 2008, Cllr Murphy served with distinction in a number of leadership roles, including Mayor of the County of Cork (2018–2019). A passionate advocate for his community, he was deeply involved in education, transport and community organisations across Bantry and West Cork.

AILG extends its sincere condolences to Patrick's family, friends, councillor colleagues and the communities he served so faithfully.

AILG extends our condolences to the loved ones and colleagues of Cllr. Waldron, Cllr. Chambers and Cllr. Gerard Murphy



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