

Borough District of Drogheda – July 2022

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough District of Drogheda held in Governors House, Millmount Drogheda, on Monday 4th July 2022 at 4.15 p.m.

In attendance: *(All attendance was in person)*

Mayor: Cllr. Michelle Hall

Members: Councillors, James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Tom Cunningham, Fiachra MacRaghnaill, Declan Power, Pio Smith, Eileen Tully

Officials: Gráinne Tuomey, Meetings Administrator
Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services
Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer
Gerry McCormack, Assistant Engineer
Rory Sheehan, Climate Action Officer

Minute No. 64/22

Confirmation of Minutes Annual Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on Monday 13th June 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. Kevin Callan and seconded by Cllr. Pio Smith.

Minute No. 65/22

Confirmation of Minutes Monthly Meeting

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on Monday 13th June 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. Kevin Callan and seconded by Cllr. Tom Cunningham.

Minute No. 66/22

Matters Arising

Minute No. 53/22 responding to a query raised, Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services advised Members that the public realm team were not ready to provide an update on St. Lawrences Gate as today was the final date for submissions of tenders. A Part 8 will come before Members in either Q4 2022 or Q1 2023.

Minute No. 67/22

Housing Progress Report

Members noted the report as circulated at the meeting. Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services, addressed all matters raised by the Members.

The following items were highlighted by Members:

- Boice Court anti-social behaviour, also overgrowth and illegal dumping on green area
- Subsidence in gardens of council properties at The Beaches, Clogherhead
- New Housing Assistance Payment Scheme (HAP) Circular is still awaited.
- Purchase of HAP properties; but allocation must meet need and cannot circumvent those already on housing list.
- Part 8 is progressing on several units for Moneymore infill.
- A number of surveys are being carried out on use of the gap between Moneymore and Castle Manor. 40 children use it for school access.

Minute No. 68/22

Operations and Marine Progress Report

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting. Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer addressed all Operations Matters raised.

Following a request for a briefing on actions following the IBAL report, Mark Johnson advised Members of a meeting with various groups to discuss the 10 items raised in the report and explore options for remedy.

- 16 objectives were listed with circa 33 actions proposed.
- Actions include but are not limited to, enforcement of derelict sites, power washing, graffiti removal, meeting private bin collectors to seek to coordinate bin collection schedules, targeting business owners who do not adhere to their legislative responsibilities on litter, assessment of bin locations, bin type and narrowing of bin openings to deter illegal domestic dumping in public bins.

Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services further advised that the Chief Executive takes this matter seriously and has met with cross-directorate resources and directed serious efforts to tackle.

Cllr. Pio Smith while expressing delight that meetings have taken place to address issues wondered why there was suddenly urgency over the IBAL when Members have been raising the same issues continuously for at least 2 years and have been given different responses. This sentiment was echoed by other Members present.

Paddy Donnelly advised that littering is a county wide challenge and that the problem is the offenders, that the IBAL report is brought annually to the Chief Executive as soon as it issues and solution finding is a practical matter for the operations team. Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer advised that where a similar report issues twice in a row that can indicate a trend that has to be addressed.

An audit of Drogheda Town Centre was requested by Members. Suggested items requested to be addressed included dead trees at Tesco and St. Peters, illegal parking, continuity of bin and plant holder types and locations, review of street signage on West St. etc.

Members were reminded that while there are only 3 traffic wardens in the town, An Garda Síochána have enforcement powers under the Roads Act and also where bye-laws are in place.

Along with potholes, footpath repair, traffic calming, road safety and signage requests at various locations the following items were highlighted:

- While wheelchair playground items have been installed in Moneymore, old surface has not been addressed. This will be checked, but it was thought this might be due to lack of funding. Similarly repairs needed at Tullyallen playground were noted
- Clarification was given that Active Travel funding allocated to Moneymore was to address the Gap, and €65k was allocated to footpaths. Members were referred to Noel Treanor for Active Travel queries
- Part of Wildflower/No Mow area in the Glen near wall border with housing cited as problematic and harbouring rats
- Harbour Fund of €600,000; a consultant is being appointed to devise a set design for Clogherhead, Port Oriel, and Annagassan, this will then go to tender
- Generally only sightlines on junctions on primary routes are cut back, due to volume of junctions throughout county. Hedge cutters cost circa €70 per hour
- A Request was made to close the backlanes between the Augustinian Church and Highlanes at nighttime due to the volume of Anti-Social Behaviour, drug taking, intimidation of passers by and littering. Members were advised of a statutory process to extinguish rights of way.
- Urgent removal of phone kiosks was requested and Members were advised that Louth County Council are working with kiosk owners to replace these with digital data centres, with 7 kiosks to be removed. S254 licensing is required.
- Works to Yellow boxes are carried out in line with legislative requirements of highway code and extra signage is not included in that.
- The proposed location of the Changing Places facility at the old Coco Cola building was discussed with Cllr Power requesting that it should be more central. Paddy Donnelly advised of coordination with the Irish Wheelchair Association who consider this the preferred option.
- Lack of pedestrian crossings at junctions cited.
- The Mayor advised of attendance at the Zero Tolerance Strategy which would request a public realm strategy around safety, and she would be requesting an audit on public lighting and unsafe areas in advance of this.
- Debris removed by River Rescue from river banks will be removed by operations.

A discussion around the timeframe for completion of the Mell Walkway took place and referenced media reports suggesting that Louth County Council actions were responsible for the delay. A request was made for the Director of Services of Infrastructure to attend the next meeting and give a presentation/full report on actions taken. Cllr. Pio Smith suggested that if false allegations were made in the media, these should be addressed.

Minute No. 69/22

Taking in Charge Report

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting. Gerry McCormack, Assistant Engineer advised he was there to answer any queries raised.

- Members commented that a lot of the delays seemed to stem from Irish Water. Gerry McCormack advised he had spoken to Irish Water on this and they have agreed to look at legacy estates and are going to create a framework of companies to carry out works and repairs. This will include old pumping stations.

Minute No. 70/22

Amenity Grants submitted in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Approval of Amenity Grants as submitted to the Elected Members in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, were

Proposed by: Cllr. James Byrne

Seconded by: Cllr. Joanna Byrne

And Resolved.

Minute No. 71/22

Drogheda Allocation of Members Community Grants

In accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, approval of Allocation of Members Community Grants as notified to the Elected Members was

Proposed by: Cllr Kevin Callan

Seconded by: Cllr Tom Cunningham

And Resolved.

Minute No. 72/22

To receive a briefing on the Climate Action Plan

Dr. Rory Sheehan introduced himself as the new Climate Action Officer for Louth County Council and briefed Members on the legislative requirements around preparation and adoption of a Climate Action Plan referring to a presentation given to Members in advance of the meeting. The presentation as given to Members was well received and Rory was thanked for his attendance.

Queries were raised regarding the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project, Carbon reduction and offsetting plans and consideration of change of location of Air Monitoring Devices. Members were advised Mark O'Neill, Executive Engineer who leads the Public Lighting Programme in Louth would be requested to provide an update report in the next infrastructure report to Members and of an extensive public consultation period where Members would be welcome to submit and provide local knowledge.

Minute No. 73/22

Condolences

Members offered sympathy to Cllr. Dolores Minogue and family whose Father had died, following other recent family deaths and a minutes silence was held.

Condolences were also extended to:

The family of Rita Walsh, Duleek Street, Drogheda and daughter in law of Larry Walsh, T.D. who had fought in the 1916 Rising. Rita made a huge contribution to St. Mary's Parish and to the Dominican Order in the town.

The family of Louth County Council Fire Services serving member of staff, Neil Carolan who died during the week

Minute No. 74/22

Congratulations

Congratulations were offered to Sean Goggins of MacBride Pitch and Putt Club who won the Senior All-Ireland Championships yesterday and to Glen Martin of the Killineer Club who won the Junior Championship on Saturday.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded.

The Minutes were confirmed at a meeting of the Council held on:

Date:

5th Sept 2022

Mayor:

Michelle Hall

Meeting Administrator:

Colo Quamey