



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

Cruinniú Ceantar Buirge Dhroichead Átha - Borough District of Drogheda Meeting

Minutes of the Borough District of Drogheda Meeting held at Council Chambers, Fair Street, Drogheda directly after the annual meeting on Monday, 1st July at 4:15pm

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: **Mayor** Cllr Paddy McQuillan

Members: **Councillor(s)** Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Eric Donovan, Anne-Marie Ford, Michelle Hall, Ejiro O'Hare Stratton, Declan Power, Pio Smith

Apologies: **Councillor(s)** James Byrne

Officials: Joe McGuinness, Director of Services
Gráinne Tuomey, Meetings Administrator
Declan McMahon, Senior Executive Engineer
Declan Grimes, Senior Engineer
Keith McArdle, Assistant Engineer

Minute No. 70/24

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 13th May 2024

The minutes of the monthly meeting held online on Monday 13th May 2024 were confirmed on the

Proposal of Cllr Kevin Callan

Seconded by Cllr Michelle Hall

And approved.

Minute No. 71/24

Matters Arising

No matters arising relating to the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting were reported.

Cllr Hall, however, advised that she was aware she had given a commitment to submit items relating to the Drogheda Area Litter Management Plan which had been deferred from approval by Members at the last meeting and would get these items in as soon as possible.

Minute No. 72/24

Housing Progress Report

Members noted the report as circulated at the meeting. Declan Grimes, Senior Engineer addressed all matters raised by the Members.

The following items were highlighted:

- A request was made for a presentation on any plans and processes for dealing with Vacant and Derelict Properties at the next meeting – Members were advised that Cormac McGee has replaced Robert Byrnes over private Vacant Properties
- Rough sleepers in tents on lands at back of Wogan's have been contacted by Louth County Council Homeless Team and offered accommodation through Drogheda Homeless Aid but have not taken the offer up
- An abandoned house on the Windmill Road that persons engaging in Anti-Social Behaviour are allegedly accessing reportedly belongs to the HSE. An appeal was made for the council to engage with HSE on this
- There are some building issues to be addressed before a planned family hub can be opened

Minute No. 73/24

Roads and Local Services Report

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting. Declan McMahon, Senior Executive Engineer addressed all questions raised.

Along with numerous requests for road surfacing, pot hole and footpath repair, traffic calming, road signage requests clean and repair, the following items were highlighted:

- Complaints about Grass cutting, overgrowth of vegetation and trees in various areas were highlighted by various Members and including some hindering footpaths and road traffic
- A presentation from the Biodiversity Officer was requested at the September meeting
- An unsecured fence at Glen View bordering a steep decline where children play was noted
- Members were advised that inconsiderate, illegal and bad parking should be referred to An Garda Síochána, but areas of consistent concern such as Mayfield will be examined to see if bollards can be installed
- National Speed Limit legislation will reduce local speed limits, but enforcement of speeding is a matter for An Garda Síochána
- Requests for traffic calming signage were noted for consideration
- Members were advised of a pilot project to reuse plainings for resurfacing which will tackle two roads in the area
- Resurfacing works will take place on the 6th August on the Drogheda to Termonfeckin Road
- Requests for ramps and traffic calming will be added to the list for assessment for Low-Cost Safety Works
- Electronic signage which is not working or missing at Baltray and Monasterboice will be looked at
- An accessibility request for a path at Ganderstown Beach will be assessed
- A dangerous structure which required the closure of Narrow West Street was discussed in detail along with other derelict and dangerous structures. Joe McGuinness Director of Services advised Members of an agreement reached on hoarding licence which would facilitate the opening of the road to pedestrian traffic, and also reminded Members of property owner responsibilities and the onus resting on owners to ensure their buildings were to standard and safe.

He gave an overview of enforcement actions carried out by Planning Enforcement in the Drogheda area on Dangerous and Derelict Structures to date this year including 57 notices served, over 100 active files, and 26 referrals to Court. Mr. McGuinness also confirmed that drone surveys are being carried out on properties

Minute No. 74/24

Taking in Charge Report

Members noted the report as set out before them. Keith McArdle Assistant Engineer responded to all questions raised.

Minute No. 75/24

Notice of Motion: Cllr Joanna Byrne

Seconded by: Cllr Eric Donovan

That this Council will carry out a Health & Safety assessment on the gravel at the steps entering The Old Abbey and consider upgrading this to Tarmac / Concrete to alleviate the risk of slips and falls, and to ensure accessibility for Wheelchairs, Buggies etc.

Reply from D. Jones, Director of Services, Place Making and Physical Development

The Westgate Vision, which has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval, incorporates a plan for this area. The plan looks to remove part of the wall (bordering Fr Connolly Way) and create a new Part M compliant opening onto Fr Connolly Way. This proposed new opening, in addition to the current lane to Narrow West Street, is proposed to be finished in high quality natural stone slabs to pavement. It is important to note that the Old Abbey and gable are Protected Structures and as such, all works in the vicinity of the area require Ministerial Consent. Tarmac would not be deemed a suitable material and therefore would not receive the required consent for such works to be undertaken, even if such a measure was to be considered appropriate as a short-term intervention.

Members noted the response to the Motion from the Executive with Cllr Joanna Byrne advising of more pedestrian traffic on the steps since the closing of Narrow West Street and of being aware of 3 significant falls in several weeks. Cllr Byrne did not consider that the response addressed the Health & Safety issue at the site. The Mayor Cllr McQuillan agreed that accessibility should be further looked at on the site.

Declan McMahon Senior Executive Engineer advised that a solution was not simple due to the protected nature of the structure, and any works therefore required Ministerial consent, and suggested an alternative route along the Connolly way which while perhaps longer offered a safer route for pedestrians.

Cllr Hall advised that during the Lú Festival someone had to be at the steps to assist and suggested that unfortunately not all areas can be fully accessible.

Minute No. 76/24

Notice of Motion: Cllr Joanna Byrne

Seconded by: Cllr Eric Donovan

In light of several vandalism attacks in The Old Abbey in recent weeks, this Council will consider installing community CCTV firstly to protect our Heritage, but also to deter ASB Behaviour which undoes the Trojan work undertaken by Volunteers twice daily for a number of years which has revitalised this area and brought it back into Community and Commercial use.

Reply from D. Jones, Director of Services, Place Making and Physical Development

While acknowledging the rationale put forward for the consideration of a community based CCTV scheme at the location identified, it is the understanding that the spirit of the community based CCTV Scheme is to increase public safety and deter illegal or anti-social behaviour in a general area/community, rather than providing a security solution for a singular building only, notwithstanding its historical status, and therefore would unlikely be eligible for consideration for funding.

It is primarily in this context that there are no plans to pursue a community-based CCTV scheme at this location.

Members noted the response to the Motion from the Executive but supported the motion as put forward by Cllr Byrne.

Minute No. 77/24

Any other business

Members noting the upcoming retirement of Declan McMahon Senior Executive Engineer thanked him for his service and support over the years and wished him well in his retirement, a sentiment that was echoed by Joe McGuinness Director of Services on behalf of himself, the Chief Executive and staff.

In response Declan McMahon advised that he had taken pride in what he could do for the community of Drogheda and that the staff and councillors are all on the same side to improve the area for all.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date:

2/9/24

Mayor:



Meeting Administrator:

