



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 Fair Street, Drogheda –  
Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 4:15pm

### **In attendance:**

**Cathaoirleach:** Councillor Michelle Hall

**Members:** Councillor(s) James Byrne, Kevin Callan, Eric Donovan, Anne-Marie Ford, Debbie McCole, Paddy McQuillan, Declan Power, Pio Smith

**Apologies:** Councillor Ejiro O'Hare Stratton

**Officials:** David Jones, Director of Service  
Susan Deery, Deputy Meetings Administrator  
Declan Grimes, Senior Engineer  
Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer  
Michelle Curran, Administrative Officer  
Aine Roddy, Assistant Communications Officer  
Sharon Keaveney, Assistant Staff Officer

### **Minute No. 1/26**

#### **Minutes of Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

The minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December were confirmed on the:

**Proposal of** Cllr. James Byrne  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Declan Power  
**And approved**

#### **Matters arising**

- Cllr. Power sought an update on Minute No.116/25 regarding the ownership of the footpath at the junction of McEvoy's lane and the existing footpath. Mr. Johnston confirmed that he would clarify the matter and revert with further details on the ownership and the safety concerns raised.
- Mr. Johnston clarified that the visibility bollards at the island in Clogherhead will be replaced imminently by the contractor, as the surfacing works have now been completed.

### **Minute No. 2/26**

#### **Housing Progress Report**

Members noted the report, as circulated in advance of the meeting, and confirmed that there were no matters arising.

### Minute No. 3/26

#### Roads and Local Services Report

Members noted the report as circulated in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer, responded to matters raised by Elected Members. The following matters were noted:

- Significant traffic congestion at the M1 retail park was experienced during December. Mr. Johnston advised that contact has been made with retail park management, who have agreed to examine feasible improvements.
- A request was received to replace numerous flexi-bollards in Drogheda that have been vandalised or damaged. Mr. Johnston confirmed that an assessment will be arranged, with a view to installing permanent bollards where required.
- Members requested that loose cobbles on William Street are repaired. Mr. Johnston advised that the area would be assessed for remedial works in due course.
- Mr. Johnston advised that improved safety measures required for Pitcher Hill will be reviewed in due course to identify the most appropriate long-term solution.
- Members raised concerns regarding in the Moneymore Estate. Mr. Johnston agreed to review the matter and indicated that extending double yellow lines may provide a solution.
- Mr. Johnston agreed to assess options to address accessibility concerns at the level crossing at the Scotch Hall/Marsh Road Junction, noting that modifications to the traffic lights may be required.
- Members requested that the existing "Slow" sign at 35 Ashfield be replaced with a "Stop" sign. Mr. Johnston confirmed that an assessment of the request will be arranged.
- Members discussed ongoing parking issues within Aston Village. Mr. Johnston confirmed that he would raise this matter with the Traffic Wardens and assess the potential for introducing a one-way system in the future.
- Traffic-calming measures were requested for Termonfeckin. Mr. Johnston advised that an assessment will be undertaken, including the feasibility of installing a zebra crossing at the shop.
- Following a request to review speed limits at Beaulieu Banks, Mr. Johnston advised that any amendments to the current limits approaching Beaulieu Banks would require a resolution of the Plenary Council.

#### Notice of Motions

### Minute No. 4/26

**Notice of Motion** Cllr. Debbie McCole  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Michelle Hall  
**And approved**

*I'm calling on this council to write to the Minister with responsibility for the Office of Public Works to request he commits to initiating a routine and regular maintenance and conservation schedule of the following, Magdalene Tower, The Buttergate, The Old Abbey, Lawrence Gate and the Town Walls, as there is significant vegetation growing on them, that may damage all of these historical structures, and Drogheda's treasured historical sites must be protected and preserved for future generations.*

**Reply from Thomas McEvoy, Economic Delivery**

The Office of Public Works (OPW) has responsibility for National Monuments in State Care. There are 23 such monuments in County Louth, one of which is St. Laurence's Gate.

The Council will write to the Minister with responsibility for the OPW to request he commits to initiating a routine and regular maintenance and conservation schedule in respect of St. Laurence's Gate.

The maintenance of Magdalene Tower, The Old Abbey, The Buttergate, and the Town Walls is not the responsibility of the OPW but rather falls under the responsibility of Louth County Council.

Louth County Council has previously undertaken works to these structures including the Old Abbey, where a Conservation Study was carried out in 2015 and works recommended in this study completed in 2016. The Community Monuments Fund (CMF) is the funding stream for works to conserve and maintain archaeological monuments and historic sites. Funding can also be sourced from the Irish Walled Towns Network. In 2025 the Irish Walled Towns Network has funded a Conservation Assessment of the upstanding section of the Town Wall east of Featherbed Lane. This project is ongoing.

In 2025 Louth County Council was unsuccessful in applications under the CMF Fund for 3 studies and surveys in Drogheda relating to monuments in the ownership/guardianship of the Council as follows:

- The circuit of Drogheda's town walls
- The Magdalene Tower
- The West Gable of the North Aisle of 'The Old Abbey'

The purpose of these studies is to inform the future conservation and maintenance of these structures.

Applications for funding under the 2026 Community Monuments Fund are currently open (closing date 13th February 2026). The Heritage Officer will submit a number of funding applications for Drogheda under the Community Monuments Fund, with consideration being given to reviewing and updating the unsuccessful applications in 2025 and re-applying for these under the 2026 Fund.

#### **Minute No. 5/26**

**Notice of Motion** Cllr. Declan Power  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Kevin Callan  
**And approved**

*That Louth County Council install appropriate warning signage on the Hill of Rath to alert motorists to the presence of pedestrians and leisure walkers in response to ongoing community safety concerns.*

#### **Reply from David Hanratty, Operations & Environment Delivery**

Installation of appropriate signage will be investigated by Louth County Council Operations section.

#### **Minute No. 6/26**

**Notice of Motion** Cllr. Declan Power  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Kevin Callan  
**And approved**

*Louth County Council undertake an audit and upgrade electrical Infrastructure in prominent locations to support Christmas lighting and community events i.e. Christmas/Farmers markets, outdoor cultural and heritage events, festivals, and PA in Drogheda.*

### **Reply from David Hanratty, Operations & Environment Delivery**

The supply and maintenance of Christmas Lighting in Drogheda is the responsibility of the Drogheda Bids company.

In relation to other festivals, community events or markets; support by way of electrical supply would be on a case by case basis but may be best served by use of temporary generators supplied by the Organisers, rather than a permanent network of installations, with the associated administrative, maintenance & operations costs.

### **Minute No. 7/26**

**Notice of Motion** Cllr. Kevin Callan  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Paddy McQuillan  
**And approved**

*Calling on this Council to provide an update on the progress of the Drogheda Local Area Plan to include all relevant steps and timeframes and to have these furnished to the members of the Borough District.*

### **Reply from Thomas McEvoy, Economic Delivery**

The current Louth County Development Plan 2021–2027 (as varied) serves as the statutory framework guiding Drogheda's development until the new county development plan is adopted. It acts as the legal and strategic foundation for Drogheda's development, guiding housing, economic growth, regeneration, and infrastructure investment. It will remain in effect until the new plan is adopted, with Drogheda's future priorities transitioning into that process. Its role can be summarised as providing:

#### Strategic Direction for Growth

The current plan sets out a settlement strategy that provide the guiding principles for the growth of the town including the projected population growth and housing allocation for Drogheda. It identifies Drogheda as a key regional growth centre, aligning with the National Planning Framework and the Eastern & Midlands Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy. This ensures that Drogheda's expansion supports balanced regional development and sustainable growth.

#### Policy Framework for Development

The plan provides detailed policies on:

- **Housing Delivery:** Directing new housing towards serviced lands within Drogheda and managing rural housing demand.
- **Regeneration:** Prioritising areas such as the Westgate, Docklands, and former quarry sites for urban renewal where regeneration projects will be supported.
- **Economy and Employment:** Establishing an economic profile and identifying opportunities for enterprise and employment growth, alongside a policy framework as to how the town can facilitate future growth and investment. It also promotes tourism and enterprise initiatives to strengthen the local economy.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** The plan underpins investment in transport, water services, and other critical infrastructure to support Drogheda's role as a regional hub.
- **Retail:** The Retail strategy identifies the core retail area in Drogheda and potential opportunity sites for retail development in the town.
- **Built Heritage –** full details of all Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas are provided and associated policy objectives acknowledging the importance of these buildings/areas of special interest

- Natural Heritage – Details of designated sites, trees and woodlands of special amenity value, and views and prospects of special amenity value in Drogheda are provided
- Flooding – Flood Zones in Drogheda have been identified on the Land Use Zoning Maps to manage flood risk
- Land Use Zoning Maps – A Land Use Zoning Map provides details of the potential land uses that will be considered within the development boundary of the town. This land use zoning map provides the basis on which planning applications and development proposals in Drogheda are considered.

## Integration with Local Area Planning

A Local Area Plan (LAP) is a statutory plan prepared under the Planning and Development Act 2000 that sits within the framework of a County Development Plan (CDP).

It was the intention of the Executive in Louth and Meath County Councils to commence a Joint Local Area Plan for Drogheda following the adoption of their respective Development Plans in Q4 of 2021. However, a Judicial Review of the Meath County Development Plan relating to lands in the Southern Environs of Drogheda created uncertainty with regards to the progression of the Joint Local Area Plan.

Notwithstanding this uncertainty, Louth County Council, working with Meath County Council carried out preparatory work on the non-statutory elements of the joint Local Area Plan for Drogheda such as land use analysis, census data review, and infrastructure planning.

The Judgement relating to this Judicial Review was published in May 2023.

The Issues Paper for the Joint Local Area Plan was published in January 2024, with the public consultation ending on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

The 2024 Planning and Development Act was signed into law in October 2024. The 2024 Planning and Development Act no longer includes provision for Local Area Plans. Under the new legislation, all land use zonings will be carried out at Development Plan Stage. In addition, section 81 of the 2024 Act stipulates that a Local Area Plan will cease to have effect when a new Development Plan has been made.

The preparatory work carried out for the Joint Local Area Plan is set out below:

### Background Work on the Joint Local Area Plan

Year	Work undertaken
2022	Background work on the preparation of the Joint Local Area Plan for Drogheda commenced in Q1 2022.
	Meetings held with statutory bodies, government agencies and infrastructure providers Irish Rail and the Department of Education
	A Tender was published in Q2 2022 seeking the provision of services by consultants to prepare Environmental Reports and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Joint Local Area Plan.
	Consultants appointed to prepare Environmental Reports in Q4 2022
2023	An analysis of existing social and community facilities was carried out
	A Town Centre Health Check of Drogheda Town Centre was carried out in Q1 of 2023 in collaboration with post-graduate students from Queen's University Belfast. The data from this project was used to inform the need for Town Centre Regeneration and to identify particular areas in need of redevelopment and regeneration.
	A review of all land use zonings was undertaken to determine any requirements for amendments to land use zonings in Drogheda.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Work undertaken</b>
<b>2024</b>	Joint Issues Paper published in Q1 2024 (31 <sup>st</sup> January to 15 <sup>th</sup> March). 153 submissions received.
	Scoping Notices for the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Local Area Plan were published
<b>2025</b>	Report on submissions received to the Issues Paper published in Q2 2025
	Analysis of POWCAR data from Census 2022 to assist in creating an employment profile and volume of commuting into and out of Drogheda
<b>Continuous analysis</b>	A regular review of extant permissions for residential and employment related development is carried out to determine the level of development ongoing in the town
	Ongoing consultation with consultants, National Transport Authority, and Transport Infrastructure Ireland in the preparation of the Local Transport Plan for Drogheda
	Review of land use zonings

Given the delays associated with the Judicial Review of the Meath County Development Plan and the impact this was having on the progression of the Joint Local Area Plan for Drogheda, Louth Co Co then progressed with the development of the Dundalk LAP and on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 published its public notice and put the Draft Dundalk LAP on public display. This plan was adopted by members at their meeting in March 2025 and zoning changes were brought into effect in the CDP through Variation #3 adopted by members in October 2025.

In September of this year, Louth County Council commenced the process for developing our new County Development Plan, a process with a strict statutory timeline (under the Planning and Development Act 2000).

### **Changes to the Planning & Development Act**

#### Repeal of Chapter II of the Planning and Development Act 2000

Chapter II of the Planning and Development 2000 (as amended) relates to Local Area Plans. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2025 this Chapter will be repealed and will therefore no longer be in effect.

On the same day, Chapter 6 of Part 3 of the 2024 Planning and Development Act comes into operation. This Chapter relates to urban area plans, priority area plans and coordinated area plans. A Development Plan must be prepared prior to the preparation of urban area plans, priority area plans or coordinated area plans as the Development Plan must specify what settlements require such plans to be prepared (The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy must specify the settlements for which a coordinated area plan is to be prepared).

Taking the foregoing legislative changes into account, the Joint Local Area Plan for Drogheda will not progress any further at this time.

As previously indicated, the Development Plan provides a policy framework for the future growth and development of the town for the remainder of the Development Plan period i.e. Q4 2027 and any development proposals in the town will be assessed against the written statement, policy objectives, and land use zoning maps for Drogheda included in the County Development Plan.

The preparatory work on the non-statutory elements of the joint Local Area Plan for Drogheda such as land use analysis, census data review, and infrastructure planning is now being absorbed into the new County Development Plan process. This means Drogheda's future planning will be embedded in the next CDP, ensuring continuity and updated priorities.

In the meantime, the joint Transport Plan for Drogheda continues to be progressed. The

submissions received in relation to the joint Issues Paper for Drogheda have been shared with the team carrying out the Transport Plan and are being taken into account. These submissions are also being considered in the Development Plan review as it relates to Drogheda.

### Minute No. 8/26

**Notice of Motion** Cllr. Michelle Hall  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Kevin Callan  
**And approved**

*This motion requests the support for Drogheda BD to become an Apartheid-free Zone, affirming our opposition to apartheid, colonialism, and racial discrimination in all forms, including against the Palestinian people. In general, this asks the local authority, business, retail and consumers to avoid Israeli products and services when and where possible, as revenue from these helps to fund the occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people. In general, this is a boycott of all Israeli goods and services, not merely those that originate in Israel's illegal settlements in Palestine – the settlements are merely symptoms of the wider problem of Israeli colonialism and apartheid, and cannot be divorced from the state that creates and sustains them.*

### Reply from Joanna Kelly, HR, Corporate & Community Delivery

This is a matter for the members

### Minute No. 9/26

**Notice of Motion** Cllr. Michelle Hall  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Pio Smith  
**And approved**

*That the council will help support the Purple Economy reach its goals of making Drogheda town centre feel safe at night through lighting:*

- 1. Ensure all streetlights in town centre are working and repaired in timely manner*
- 2. Light up St. Peter's Church and Laurence Gate by taking the lights into the asset management of the council*
- 3. Support businesses to **Leave a Light On**, an initiative that encourages businesses to keep a single light on during winter nights to enhance safety, vibrancy, and community spirit in urban areas after dark.*

### Reply from David Hanratty, Operations & Environment Delivery

1. All public lighting within the County is managed by the operations section and maintained by a contractor on our behalf. Repair and replacement metrics form part of the contractor's performance reporting. The average time to repair a light has ranged from 2 to 6 days across 2025.
2. A legacy agreement of shared responsibility for the lights at St. Peter's Church exists, whereby the lights are in the ownership of the church, but the electricity costs are borne by Louth County Council. The lights at St. Laurence' gate are currently owned and maintained by Louth County Council.
3. The 'Leave a Light On' initiative is currently being undertaken in Cork and Limerick. The Night-Time Economy Adviser for Drogheda has reviewed the initiative in these areas and formulated a specific proposal for Drogheda which is currently under consideration. The proposal aims to support and work with businesses and retail to enhance a sense of welcome and vibrancy on the streets after dark. The initiative would be in addition to public street

lighting and would aim to address feedback from the Drogheda by Night consultation in April 2025 looking at street ambience and safety concerns. The proposal also considers environmental issues on energy use and carbon impact. Upon approval the initiative would be implemented in Q1 2026.

#### **Minute No. 10/26**

**Notice of Motion** Cllr. James Byrne  
**Seconded by** Cllr. Michelle Hall  
**And approved**

*"I'm calling on Louth County Council to engage with the Minister for Transport to discuss the future of the M1 tolls, given their prolonged negative impact on Drogheda from an economic and social perspective, with the intention of pushing for their removal."*

#### **Reply from Thomas McEvoy, Economic Delivery**

Louth County Council will write to the Minister of Transport to highlight the views of the members as outlined in the motion.

#### **Minute No. 11/26**

**Notice of Question** Cllr. James Byrne

*"Will Louth County Council engage with Meath County Council to agree on a maintenance and improvement schedule to McEvoy's Lane, straddling the county boundary between Rosevale and Elmwood, to enhance access for all who use it as a means of getting to and from local schools and sporting clubs?"*

#### **Reply from David Hanratty, Operations & Environment Delivery**

The Operations section of Louth County Council have an excellent working relationship with our colleagues in Meath County Council, particularly on areas such as this, which cross the county boundary interface. I can confirm that Louth County Council have been in contact with Meath about the location mentioned. The area directly below and adjacent the railway bridge is the responsibility of Irish Rail and the Operations team will contact them directly to progress a maintenance plan for this area.

#### **Minute No. 12/26**

#### **Condolences**

Condolences were extended to the families and friends of:

- Ita Cunningham, Clogherhead
- Elizabeth (Liz) Clarke, Drogheda
- Kathy McQuillan, Moneymore

As there was no other business the meeting concluded.

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

**Date:** 9th FEB 26

**Mayor:** Michelle Hall

**Meeting Administrator:** Sinead Dooley