

Borough District of Drogheda – October 2017

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough District of Drogheda held on Monday, 2nd October, 2017 at Barlow House, West Street, Drogheda.

In attendance:

Mayor: Cllr. P. Smith

Members: Cllrs: J. Byrne, T. Byrne, K. Callan, K. Flood, F. Godfrey, D. Saurin, O. Tully

Officials: Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services
Aoife Lawler, Senior Executive Officer
Martina Sheeran, Acting Senior Engineer
Pat Finn, Senior Engineer
John Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer
Alan Sherry, Meetings Administrator

Apologies: Cllr. P. Bell

Minute No. 105/17

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2017, were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. F. Godfrey and seconded by Cllr. T. Byrne.

Minute No. 106/17

Matters arising

It was agreed to update members in relation to the progress on the work on the thatch cottage on the Donore Road.

An update was sought in relation to Carranstown House following the recent fire

It was agreed to amend minute no. 99/17 to change Cllr. Byrne to Cllr. T. Byrne

Minute No. 107/17

County Facilities Scheme

Mr J. Lawrence advised the members on the assessment criteria, process undertaken and the role of the Local Community Development Committee in ensuring an equitable countywide distribution of the available funds. He further advised that the Community Office in Louth County Council will look for other funding opportunities for promoters unsuccessful in securing a grant under this scheme. Mr Lawrence answered queries and questions from the members.

Proposed by: Cllr. F. Godfrey

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Smith

And resolved.

Minute No. 108/17

Housing and Communities Progress Report

The need to encourage anyone that is sleeping on the street to contact the Housing Department was emphasised.

It was agreed to report back to the members in relation to anti-social behaviour in Council estates and to look into the mechanisms to tackle the problem such as a Community Safety Forum.

Minute No. 109/17

Operations, Marine and Infrastructure Report

It was agreed to report back to the members in relation to tackling graffiti in the town.

It was undertaken to report to the members in relation to the work being carried out on the pathway beside St. Laurence's Gate.

It was agreed to investigate what works are necessary in relation to the upkeep of the Dale.

The programme in relation to the clearing of gullies will be reviewed.

The furniture dumped illegally at Newtown will be addressed.

Minute No. 110/17

Allocation of Community Grants

The need to set out what projects were to receive money was emphasised, with the end of the year approaching rapidly for works to be completed.

Minute No. 111/17

Update on Taking in Charge of Housing Developments

Members noted the report.

Minute No. 112/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Bell

Motion was deferred.

'That this Council construct infill housing in Rathmullan Park in the area at the rear of 190-196 on open space where previously homes existed. This motion is aimed at meeting a housing need in the immediate area and would assist preventing the area from being used for illegal dumping and antisocial behaviour'.

REPLY:

The Council will assess this site with regard to it being a potential infill site for potential provision of housing.

Minute No. 113/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. T. Byrne

Seconded by: Cllr. K. Callan

"That Louth County Council liaise with Bus Eireann and the National Roads Authority to provide a Bus Stop/Shelter and Seat opposite the entrance to Lavin Park Housing Estate in Tullyallen, in the interest of public safety, especially for the elderly and young families using this essential bus services."

REPLY:

Louth County Council has had some preliminary discussions with Bus Eireann who have confirmed that this location is used as a bus stop. The stop is not an official stop which meets National Transport Authority standards and it is likely that lands will need to be acquired in order to meet these standards. There is no

provision in the current budget to carry out any works here but if a funding source is identified the matter could be put forward for consideration when next year's roadwork's programme is being prepared.

Members agreed the motion

Minute No. 114/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Smith
Seconded by: Cllr. K. Callan

"Calling on this Borough District to give an account of the progress to date regarding Purple Flag Accreditation for Drogheda."

REPLY:

To progress to entry stage for the Purple Flag a Working Group needs to be established. As the Purple Flag Coordinator the Council will make contact with the key groups and request nomination to the Purple Flag Working Group. Once established the Group can meet and progress to the preparation of the Purple Flag Entry for 2018.

Members noted the reply.

Minute No. 115/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Smith
Seconded by: Cllr. K. Flood

" Calling on this Borough District to outline the future plans for the old O'Reilly Bros property in Narrow West Street."

REPLY:

A large portion of the property is current occupied by St. Vincent de Paul for use in the selling of donated goods to raise finance for it's charitable work. The Council has no plans to alter this arrangement and expects to use the remainder of the property as storage or office accommodation when the refurbishment of the Drogheda Civic Offices gets underway.

In the discussion members emphasised the need to ensure the proper redevelopment of Narrow West Street and it was agreed to update members in relation to the Council's plans for the area as soon as draft proposals were ready.

Members noted the reply.

Minute No. 116/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. R. Culhane
Deferred

Will Louth County Council take action or instruct the owner of the property adjacent to the Pines Hamlet Estate to take action in dealing with the serious infestation of Japanese knotweed which will if left unchecked, have serious repercussions for property and environment in Drogheda.

REPLY:

It is an offence under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 to plant, disperse, spread or otherwise cause to grow various specified plants, including Japanese knotweed. A person summarily convicted of such an offence is liable to a Class A fine or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both. A person convicted on indictment is liable to a fine not exceeding €500,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or both.

The body responsible for enforcing this law is the National Parks and Wildlife Service, assisted, as necessary, by An Garda Síochána. Louth County Council has no role in relation to enforcing this law, except in reporting alleged incidences to the relevant authorities.

The council also monitors the presence of Japanese knotweed and similar problem species and records sightings with the National Biodiversity Data Centre. The council acts to kill Japanese knotweed on its own land and erects warning signs in such areas, to raise awareness and to prevent accidental spread of the plant.

Minute No. 117/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. R. Culhane
Deferred

" Calling on Louth County Council to continue the footpath from Deep Forde housing estate in Meath Co Co area to The Five Oaks housing estate on the Dublin Rd Drogheda. In the interest of serious safety concerns it is imperative that this footpath be completed as children and adults alike must cross the road to access both Drogheda Town Centre and likewise South Gate shopping centre. Residents in both Five Oaks and Deep Forde cannot access either estates without crossing a very busy road at enormous risk to their personal safety. "

REPLY:

The estimate cost of the proposed works is €63,255 + VAT. There is no provision in the Road Works Programme 2017 for the design and construction of a footpath at this location. The delivery of such an initiative might best be delivered as a joint programme between Louth and Meath County Councils. A number of the Meath elected members have enquired about such infrastructure provision.

Minute No. 118/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. T. Byrne
Seconded by: Cllr. F. Godfrey

That Louth County Council provide a Pedestrian Crossing at Sacred Heart Secondary School, Drogheda, from School to the Sportsfield opposite to ensure the safety of students crossing the road throughout the day for physical education, recreation, health and safety exercises and for the benefit of local residents.

REPLY:

A visual inspection of the area adjacent to the Heart Secondary School, Drogheda, will be carried out by the South Louth Area engineering staff asap to determine if there are any safety issues existing and/or if there are any traffic calming existing at this location.

On foot of that visual inspection, a detailed list of any works deemed necessary will be drawn up along with all associated costs. The proposed works will be added to the list of pending works within the SLA and the proposed works will be carried out in a prioritised order if/when the funding and manpower become available.

Member noted the reply.

Minute No. 120/17

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. F. Godfrey
Seconded by: Cllr. P. Smith

"That Louth County Council recovers the ownership of St Laurence Gate from the Office of Public Works as it belongs to the people of Drogheda, and has been neglected by the OPW over the years. It was handed over to the OPW back in the 1960s – it's time to take it back."

REPLY:

St. Laurence's Gate is a National Monument and therefore is in the guardianship of the Office of Public Works. This status facilitates access to any funding sources that may be available for the maintenance and upkeep of national monuments. All works on National Monuments require Ministerial approval and again this is more effectively managed by the guardianship arrangements. Louth County Council do not have access to own resources to carry out any works on the monument and it is recommended that the current status remain as is.

Member noted the reply.

Minute No. 121/17

Notice of Question – Frank Godfrey

" What proposals has Louth County Council got to upgrade the appearance of the town of Drogheda prior to the commencement of Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann in August 2018, with particular reference to buildings around Narrow West Street, the Bridge of Peace, Smith's former B&B, Donaghy's Mill, Trinity Street, Corrigan's pub on George's Street, Gunne's former building on The Bull Ring, and the Marsh Road/docklands area to mention but a few? The state of the inner banks of the River Boyne is also a cause for concern."

REPLY:

The Chief Executive has played a key role in securing Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann 2018 for Drogheda. The Council are now facilitating the delivery of Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann with a number of senior staff engaged directly with the organising Committee. Every effort will be made to ensure that the town, which has again secured a Gold Medal in the National Tidy Towns competitions, and its environs are looking their best of the August 2018 event. A number of initiatives are in place such as the shop front improvement scheme which will be brought to the attention of all property owners.

The Question was noted by the Members.

The meeting then concluded.

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

Date: _____

Mayor: _____

Meeting Administrator: _____