

*Minutes of Ordinary meeting of Council November  
2016*

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Louth County Council held in County Hall, Dundalk on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016

**In attendance:**

**Cathaoirleach:** Cllr. P. Bell

**Members:** Councillors: M. Butler, J. Byrne, T. Byrne, K. Callan, A. Cassidy, E. Coffey, E. Corrigan, R. Culhane, T. Cunningham, M. Dearey, M. Doyle, K. Flood, F. Godfrey, J. Cassidy-Green, C. Keelan, C. Markey, J. McGahon, P. McGeough, K. Meenan, D. Minogue, L. Reilly, P. Savage, T. Sharkey, P. Smith, J. Tenanty, O. Tully, A. Watters, M. Yore

**Officials:** J. Martin, Chief Executive  
J. McGuinness Director of Services  
E. O’Gorman, Director of Services  
F. Pentony, Director of Services  
P. Donnelly, Director of Services  
B. Woods, Head of Finance  
M. Daly, Senior Executive Officer  
A. Lawler, Senior Executive Officer  
P. Finn, Senior Engineer  
A. Abbott-King, Senior Planner  
A. Sherry, Meetings Administrator

**Minute No. 172/16**

**Confirmation of Minutes**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. P. Savage  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. K. Meenan  
**And resolved:**

That the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016 be confirmed.

**Minute No. 173/16**

**Matters arising**

There were no matters arising

**Minute No. 174/16**

**Minutes for noting**

The following minutes were noted by the members.

Corporate Policy Group 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016  
Borough District of Drogheda 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016  
Municipal District of Dundalk 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016  
Municipal District of Ardee 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**Minute No. 175/16**

**Monthly Management Report**

Members considered the Management Report dated 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

Queries in regard to the report were addressed by the Chief Executive, Members of the Management Team, and Senior Staff. Issues addressed included:-

- It was requested that page numbers be included on future monthly management reports
- It was agreed to circulate members with the legal opinion in respect of the application of rent arrears on tenant's rent accounts
- It was agreed to update the members at the next meeting in relation to the work of the Boundary Commission.
- The issue of the development of the Cu Chulainn School was raised by several members and concern at recent correspondence from the Department of Education and Skills. Members were assured that Louth County Council had done everything it could to progress the project. It was suggested that a meeting should take place between the Chief Executive, LMETB and the Chair of the Board of Management.

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- It was agreed that members could suggest items to be tweeted by the Council on its Twitter account.
- The Cathaoirleach undertook to seek a meeting between the Ardee members and TII in relation to the Ardee By-Pass.
- It was undertaken to consult with Monaghan County Council in relation to their use of CCTV for litter black spots and to report back in relation to the enforcement of disability parking spaces.

**Minute No. 176/16**

**Section 183 Notice – Proposed Disposal of Land at rear of William Street, Drogheda to Stephanie Crinion**

**Proposed by: Cllr. P. Savage**

**Seconded by: Cllr. K. Callan**

**And resolved:**

That having considered the notice on the matter dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 to confirm the Disposal of Land at rear of William Street, Drogheda Co. Louth for a consideration of €1,000.

**Minute No. 177/16**

**Section 183 Notice – Proposed Disposal of Land at Scarlett Street, Drogheda to North & East Housing Association**

**Proposed by: Cllr. P. Savage**

**Seconded by: Cllr. J. Byrne**

**And resolved:**

That having considered the notice on the matter dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 to confirm the Disposal of Land at Scarlett Street, Drogheda for a consideration of €7,500.

**Minute No. 178/16**

**Casual Vacancy - To consider filling of the Casual Vacancy in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended arising from the resignation of Councillor Jim Loughran on Monday 17th October 2016**

**Proposed by: Cllr. E. Corrigan**

**Seconded by: Cllr. K. Meenan**

**And resolved:**

That Antoin Watters shall fill the Casual Vacancy on Louth County Council arising from the resignation of Cllr. Jim Loughran at the October meeting of Council.

Cllr. Corrigan paid tribute to Jim Loughran and welcomed Cllr. Watters to the Council. Several members and the Chief Executive welcomed Cllr. Watters and he thanked the members.

**Minute No. 179/16**

**To consider the filling of the vacancy on the Planning and Environment SPC which has occurred due to the resignation of Councillor Jim Loughran on 17th October 2016**

**Proposed by: Cllr. T. Sharkey**

**Seconded by: Cllr. T. Cunningham**

**And resolved:**

That Cllr. Antoin Watters shall fill the vacancy on the Planning and Environment SPC arising from the resignation of Cllr. Jim Loughran at the October meeting of Council.

**Minute No. 180/16**

**To consider filling the vacancy on the East Border Region Forum which has occurred due to the resignation of Councillor Jim Loughran on 17th October 2016**

**Proposed by: Cllr. A. Watters**

**Seconded by: Cllr. E. Corrigan**

**And resolved:**

That Cllr. Joanna Byrne shall fill the vacancy on the East Border Region Forum which has occurred due to the resignation of Cllr. Jim Loughran at the October meeting of Council.

**Minute No. 181/16**

**Votes of Sympathy**

Votes of sympathy were extended by the members to the families of:-

- Vanessa Ryan
- Sr. Edel Weir
- Noel Keane

**Minute No. 182/16**

**Presentation – Irish Congress of Trade Unions**

Macdara Doyle from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions gave a presentation to the members about the Charter for fair Conditions at Work and asked the members to consider passing a motion of support for the Charter at a future meeting. He then took questions and noted comments from the members.

**Minute No. 183/16**

**Conferences and Events**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. O. Tully  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. P. Savage  
**And resolved:**

To approve the attendance of members recorded in the Conference & Events Register at such Conferences and Events (No.9) listed within the agenda & endorsed by the Corporate Policy Group on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**Minute No. 184/16**

**Allocation of Community Grants**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. M. Yore  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. F. Godfrey  
**And resolved:**

To approve Members Community Grant Allocations (No. 51) as listed on the report circulated with the agenda

**Minute No. 185/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. P. Bell  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. P. Smith

'That this Council commit to extending the Compulsory Purchase Order scheme already applied in Dundalk, to Drogheda and other areas of the County for the purpose of securing homes to be made available for applicants on Council's social housing list'.

'That this Council engage with property owners identified as having vacant houses for the purpose of securing same for the purpose of renting to social housing applicants'.

**Reply:**

**The Housing Authority has secured funding approval for the acquisition of 12 units of accommodation for this purpose and continues to encourage owners of dwellings to put vacant units into productive use**

***Following a discussion the members approved the motion***

**Minute No. 186/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by: Cllr. K. Flood**

**Seconded by: Cllr. J. Byrne**

"Louth County Council, noting the public's concerns on the planned extension by Irish Cement, make a submission querying potential threats to health and environmental safety in the Louth area if this extension goes ahead"

***In the course of the discussion it was agreed to invite the EPA and Irish Cement to a meeting with the members. Members approved the motion***

**Minute No. 187/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by: Cllr. A. Cassidy**

**Seconded by: Cllr. K. Flood**

That this Council provide a breakdown per Rapid District across the county of the number of instances that Louth County Council requested Gardai to review CCTV in Rapid areas in relation to anti-social behaviour with a view to prosecuting those involved in criminal activity"

**Reply:**

**There were 4 requests from the Gardai in Drogheda in 2016 to date. No requests recorded from Gardai in Dundalk in 2016.**

***During the discussion it was noted that this matter needed to be raised at the Joint Policing Committee. Members noted the reply***

**Minute No. 188/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by: Cllr. T. Cunningham**  
**Seconded by: Cllr. P. McGeough**

"That Louth County Council recognises the importance of tourism to the local economy. Many tourists use camper vans. The provision of serviced parking throughout the county, providing electric hook up and fresh water services would improve the profile of Louth as a tourist destination for visitors who holiday in Camper Vans. We call for an analysis of the potential provision of these services."

**Reply:**

**There are presently three static caravan parks and one touring caravan park in County Louth.**

**The Council acknowledge that the provision of caravan and camping sites are an important element of accommodation for the tourist market. Policies EDE 29 and EDE 30 of the Louth County Development Plan 2016 – 2021 support the provision of caravan and camping sites as follows:**

**EDE 29 To encourage new caravan parks and camping sites to locate within existing settlements which are appropriately screened and which are served by an adequate and acceptable road network and foul drainage. In exceptional circumstances caravan and camping sites may be permitted in previous worked sites, forest or woodland or demesne setting.**

**EDE 30 To facilitate the upgrade of existing caravan parks and camping sites in approved locations.**

**Council staff are available to engage in pre-planning discussions with any potential developer of these facilities**

***During the discussion the Chair of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC undertook to include the item on it's agenda for discussion. Members noted the reply.***



**Minute No. 189/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. M. Dearey  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. M. Butler

"That Louth County Council works with Bus Éireann as a matter of urgency on the upgrade of the bus route infrastructure and information systems throughout County Louth, beginning with the routes serving our two main towns, Dundalk and Drogheda."

**Reply:**

**The Council did carry out infrastructural works to support Bus Éireann in Monasterboice and have received no further requests from the company.**

**Upgrading of information systems is a matter for Bus Éireann.**

***During the discussion the lack of and poor condition of bus stops was highlighted and it was requested that Louth county Council write to Bus Éireann to address the issue. Members noted the reply***

**Minute No. 190/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. M. Yore  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. F. Godfrey

"That Louth Co Council undertake to clear all drains starting in main shopping streets across our County to eliminate the risk of Flooding which is exacerbated by blocked drains"

**Reply:**

**We have in place a number of contracts to address the issue of drain cleaning. This programme of cleaning is restricted to known areas where issues arise and is subject to resources. There will always be a need for an immediate and or emergency response to address blocked drains and gullies which become blocked following significant rainfall levels. The current arrangements are satisfactory and meet existing requirements**

***It was requested to provide the members with details of the schedule for drain cleaning for passing on to residents. Members noted the reply.***

**Minute No. 191/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by: Cllr. M. Butler**  
**Seconded by: Cllr. M. Dearey**

That Louth County Council actively promote and champion the An Taisce Clean Coasts "Think Before You Flush" public awareness campaign.

**Reply:**

**Think Before You Flush is a public awareness campaign about the problem sanitary products and other items can cause in our marine environment and our wastewater systems if they are flushed down the toilet. The campaign is operated by An Taisce's Clean Coasts programme. The Think Before You Flush campaign invites us all in making small changes in our bathroom behaviour.**

**The Council's Communities section will actively promote this campaign in the following ways**

- 1. Create a link to the campaign in all 'Friday Communique' notifications during October and November 2016 (approx 250 group recipients)**
- 2. Utilize the network of Tidy Towns Groups to promote the campaign at grassroots level**
- 3. Run an information campaign during December with the secondary schools in the county to increase awareness of this issue.**
- 4. Create a link on the Councils website to the campaign.**

***It was requested that details of the campaign be included in the Council's newsletter to its tenants, on the Council twitter account and posters available for the An Taisce website be used by the Council. Members noted the reply.***

**Minute No. 192/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by: Cllr. M. Butler**  
**Seconded by: Cllr. M. Dearey**

That Louth County Council from 1st January, 2017 no longer charges the following fees

1. €25 for applicants to the tenant purchase incremental scheme
2. €50 for those applying for a house purchase loan

**Reply:**

**These charges were applied as a contribution to the administrative costs of applying to both schemes**

***The members were informed that this is an executive function and it was agreed to discuss the matter at the Housing, Community Planning and Emergency Services SPC. Members noted the reply***

**Minute No. 193/16**

**Notice of Motion**

**Proposed by: Cllr. A. Cassidy**  
**Seconded by: Cllr. E. Coffey**

Calling on Louth County Council to implement the recommendations of local government auditor (1.9.14) Michael O Gorman. Which are

- 1 To undertake a comprehensive review of its corporate estate portfolio.
- 2 Identify all unregistered plots of land to which it has title.
- 3 Take possession of these unregistered plots of land.
- 4 Make applications for registration of title to these plots of land with the Property registration Authority.

This motion specifically relates to a site (no.1 Blackbush lane, Drogheda). Michael O' Gorman has also concluded that title to this site remains in the name of Drogheda Borough Council. In the interests of Public safety it is imperative that this property is registered urgently.

**Reply:**

The Council continuously reviews its property portfolio and where plots are identified as being in the Council's ownership but are unregistered, the Council endeavours to register our ownership with the Property Registration Authority (PRA) subject to the Council being able to satisfy the requirements of the PRA with regard to first registration. It should be noted, however, that obtaining first registration of a property can be extremely onerous and take a significant length of time.

*Following a lengthy discussion it was agreed to circulate a summary of the issues to the members. Members noted the reply.*

**Minute No. 194/16**

**Notice of Question**

**Proposed by: Cllr. T. Byrne**

In relation to the funding of €1.2 million granted for the Greenway from Oldbridge to Newgrange, could you give an update on its current status, which is the responsibility of Louth County Council/Meath County Council, under a scheme administered by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport?"

**REPLY:**

**The Greenway is located in Meath County Council area and queries on this grant should be made to that local authority**

*Members noted the question & reply.*

**Minute No. 195/16**

**Notice of Question**

**Proposed by: Cllr. M. Dearey**

With regard to planning applications that were approved prior to 2009 and were later granted extensions of duration:

Did the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines" and which came into force in the intervening period inform those decisions?

**REPLY:**

Planning applications that were approved prior to 2009, and were later granted extensions of durations under section 42(1)(a)(ii) (i.e. commercial, economic or technical reasons) were assessed in the context of guidelines that came into force in the intervening period including "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines".

An application for extension of duration made under section 42(1)(a)(i) (i.e. where substantial works had already been carried out) cannot within the law be re-assess against the changed policy context.

*Members noted the question & reply*

**Minute No. 196/16**

**Notice of Question**

**Proposed by: Cllr. P. Smith**

"Can LCC outline how much it costs to insure the Local Authority each year, how many claims were lodged against the Local Authority in 2015 and 2016, if we use the in house legal services of IPB, our comparator rating in regards to our loss ratio compared to other Local Authorities in the state, and if any trends have been identified in terms of location of claims and/or types of claims."

**REPLY:**

Annual Insurance costs are approx €3,050,000.00 For the years 2015 and 2016 there were 140 and 111 claims respectively. Claims are initially assessed by our own technical staff who work in conjunction with IPB investigators. Since 2015 the in house Legal Services of IPB are now utilised for all cases. We do not have comparative or loss ratios compared to other local authorities. Staff managing claims would be conscious of particular locations that tend to attract more than the average number of claims. Some of the areas identified are due for renewal and upgrade under a number of schemes

*Members noted the question & reply.*

**Minute No. 197/16**

**Notice of Question**

**Proposed by: Cllr. J. McGahon**

"Will Louth County Council outline their current involvement in relation to the tennis courts in Carlingford village and will they outline any future plans, if any, they may have for the site?"

**REPLY:**

**The Tennis Courts in Carlingford are in the ownership of Louth County Council. There are no formal arrangements currently in place for the use of the facility. In the past it has been used for a number of events including medieval themed festivals. There are no plans at present to invest in the facility.**

***Members noted the question & reply.***

That concluded the business of the meeting.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cathaoirleach: \_\_\_\_\_

Meetings Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_