

Minutes of Council Meeting December 2020

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Louth County Council held in St. Gerard's Hall, St. Alphonsus Road, County Hall, Dundalk on Monday 21st December 2020

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Dolores Minogue

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Hugh Conlon, Edel Corrigan, Tom Cunningham, Maria Doyle, Conor Keelan (Remote) Seán Kelly, Fiachra MacRaghnaill, Pearse McGeough, Andrea McKevitt, Paddy McQuillan, Kevin Meenan (Remote) Declan Power, John Reilly, Tomás Sharkey, John Sheridan, Pio Smith (Remote) Jim Tenanty, Antoin Watters, Maeve Yore

Officials: J. Martin, Chief Executive
F. Pentony, Director of Services
C. Duff, Director of Services
J. McGuinness, Director of Services
P. Donnelly, Director of Services
B. Woods, Head of Finance
G. Tuomey, Meetings Administrator
M. Bagnell, Head of I.T.

Apologies: Cllrs. Emma Coffey, Michelle Hall, Liam Reilly, Eileen Tully

Minute No. 183/20

Confirmation of Minutes

Proposed by: Cllr. John Sheridan

Seconded by: Cllr. Sean Kelly

And resolved:

That the minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 16th November 2020 be confirmed.

Minute No. 184/20

Confirmation of Minutes

Proposed by: Cllr. John Sheridan

Seconded by: Cllr. Andrea McKevitt

And resolved:

That the minutes of the Budget Meeting held on 16th November 2020 be confirmed.

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Minute No. 185/20

Confirmation of Minutes

Proposed by: Cllr. Fiachra MacRaghnaill
Seconded by: Cllr. Sean Kelly
And resolved:

That the minutes of the Reconvened Budget Meeting held on 19th November 2020 be confirmed.

Minute No. 186/20

Matters Arising

(Added in to agenda on foot of submission to Chair)

Cllr Maeve Yore and Cllr Seán Kelly expressed unhappiness at the letter from the HSE received this morning, in response to the submission made by Councillors supporting Mental Health Services in Louth. They have requested that Paul Reid head of HSE Paul Reid be written to with a copy of correspondence advising of unhappiness at the response and requesting he direct representatives of HSE CH08 area, Mental Health to attend an in-camera meeting with them.

Minute No. 187/20

Minutes for noting

Minutes of the meetings listed below were noted by the members.

Corporate Policy Group 8th November 2020
Borough District of Drogheda 2nd November 2020
Municipal District of Dundalk 3rd November 2020
Municipal District of Ardee 5th November 2020
Economic Development & Enterprise Support SPC 10th September 2020
Climate Change & Energy SPC 12th October 2020

Minute No. 188/20

Casual Vacancy – Cllr. Colm Markey

Noted - Nomination not yet made by the party concerned.

Minute No. 189/20

Section 183 Notice – Proposed Disposal of Land at Drumleck, Castlebellingham

Proposed by: Cllr. John Sheridan

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Seconded by: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt

And resolved:

That having considered the notice on the matter dated 9th November 2020, to confirm the disposal of 0.2639 hectares of land in the townland of Drumleck and Electoral division of Castlebellingham for a consideration of €80,000 (eighty thousand euro) to Comhras Iompar Eireann, Hueston Station Dublin 8 to facilitate their track maintenance programme.

Minute No. 190/20

Section 183 Notice – Proposed Disposal of Land by way of lease at Port Oriel, Clogherhead

Proposed by: Cllr. Tom Cunningham

Seconded by: Cllr. Jim Tenanty

And resolved:

That having considered the notice on the matter dated 16th November 2020, to confirm the disposal by way of 15 year lease of the Fish Auction Hall & Offices at Port Oriel, Clogherhead for a consideration of an initial rent €12,500 per annum (twelve thousand five hundred euro), and is subject to review, to the Clogherhead Fisherman's Co-operative Society Ltd

Minute No. 191/20

Section 183 Notice – Proposed Disposal of Land at St. Patrick's Cemetery, Dowdallshill, Dundalk

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore

Seconded by: Cllr. Dolores Minogue

And resolved:

That having considered the notice on the matter dated 25th November 2020, to confirm the disposal of 180 square metres (0.0018 hectares) of land at Dowdallshill, Newry Road, Dundalk for a consideration of €1,000 (one thousand euro) to Wonderglade Limited, Quayside Business Park, Dundalk & agreement that the purchaser continues a stone wall to roadway (already completed)

Minute No. 192/20

Section 183 Notice – Proposed Disposal of Land at Lagavooren, Duleek Lower, Drogheda, Co. Meath

Proposed by: Cllr. Joanna Byrne

Seconded by: Cllr. Tom Cunningham

And resolved:

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That having considered the notice on the matter dated 30th November 2020, to confirm the disposal of 1.05608 hectares of land at Lagavooren, Duleek Lower, Drogheda Co. Meath for a consideration of €164,000 (one hundred and sixty four thousand euro) following a sale advertised through a local auctioneer, to Manley Construction Limited.

Minute No. 193/20

Service Delivery Plan 2021

Members questioned the Service Delivery Plan for housing and specifically:-

- Why no specific timeframe was set to facilitate transfers
- No timeframe around HAP
- Private Rented Accommodation inspections
- How it was intended to reduce the average letting time from 39 weeks to 16 week target
- Why the average cost of re-letting was increasing by €1k
- Was the figure of 1560 wks to re-let correct
- Why there was no targeted maintenance figure allocated
- How the reduction of 49% Long Term homeless in E.A. to 20% would be achieved

Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services advised on all queries raised.

Proposed by: Cllr. John Sheridan
Seconded by: Cllr. Paddy McQuillan
And resolved:

To adopt the Service Delivery Plan for 2021 without amendment.

Minute No. 194/20

Report on CPG Meeting

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that the meeting of the CPG was held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, at 9.00 am on Wednesday 9th December 2020.

The following items were discussed:

- Amended Standing Orders for remote meetings now adopted in all districts and by Council
- Clarification on 15 day notice period for submission of Notice of Motion received
- SPC updates received
- Upcoming Oireachtas Meeting of 14th December & Briefing on recent meeting with Minister

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- Difficulty in hosting Civic Awards

Minute No. 195/20

Reports by Strategic Policy Committee Chairpersons

Planning & Support Infrastructure

Cllr. Maria Doyle advised that the planning SPC had received informative presentations on Community Engagement.

Housing

Cllr. Joanna Byrne updated Members that the SPC had received an in-depth presentation on Dog Control measures and an overview on a Draft Dog Control Policy from Sinead McVerry; a very informative presentation on the current status of the Draft County Development Plan from J. Kelly Senior Planner, following which a Q&A took place over zoom.

Economic Development

Cllr. Pio Smith advised of a 5 year Tourism Plan and to incorporate Businesses in the Boyne Valley region. Presentations were given by Council and LEO staff on Boyne Valley Drive, Carlingford and other festival plans, Brexit and Shop Local.

Minute No. 196/20

Monthly Management Report

It was agreed at outset to note the Reports but to take questions after all other business was completed.

When taken Members queried:-

- Whether the recent ESRI report on housing need contradicted the Housing Delivery plan
- The figures in the recent NOAC report on planning decisions decreasing by 10% to 40.66%
- Whether the Place Names Committee had any role in advising on place names where no suitable names were put forward by developers
- Why grant funding had decreased from €500 to €200 and if this could be increased back
- Whether there was any update on proposed painting of bring banks
- What the application process was for funding of cycle lanes and whether LCC has applied
- Update on any correspondence to TII on traffic calming at Collon as two recent crashes

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- New drinking fountains welcomed and more requested in Ardee Park

- Use of rye instead of salt to grit roads as more eco friendly
- Salt bank provision at Flagstaff and Edentubber
- Update on fire tender attack and input of An Garda Síochána
- Homeless Service provision over Christmas
- Disabled and Elderly grant funding update

Members were advised on all matters by respective Directors of Service.

Minute No. 197/20

Dublin/Belfast Economic Corridor

Frank Pentony, Director of Services advised on the requirement for Nomination of three members to the governance/oversight committee of the Dublin/Belfast Economic Corridor and recommended one could be taken from each MD/BD.

Members generally agreed, and it was proposed to refer this back to MDs by Cllr. Maria Doyle and Seconded by Cathaoirleach Dolores Minogue.

Minute No. 198/20

Allocation of Members Community Grants

Proposed by: Cllr. John Sheridan

Seconded by: Cllr. Maria Doyle

And resolved:

To approve Members Community Grant Allocations as circulated with the agenda.

Minute No. 199/20

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt

Seconded by Cllr. John Sheridan

"Calling on Louth County Council to postpone the vote on the introduction of the Draft Development Plan and extend the date until the end of March whereby submissions can be received from the public to change or amend the plan. This request is in light of the Covid-19 restrictions and public health and safety concerns. The citizens of County Louth deserve the right to meet and discuss the impacts of the new proposals, by postponing; citizens will be given the right to have their voices heard."

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Reply from Mr. Frank Pentony, Director of Services, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development:

The timelines set for receipt of submissions in relation to the draft Development Plan are prescribed in the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended. Following the receipt of the submissions by 23rd December 2020, the Chief Executive's report on submissions must be submitted to the elected members not later than 24th March 2021. Accordingly, it is not possible to extend the closing date for submissions to the end of March

A general discussion ensued on this motion with several members advising being in favour of delay to submission end date due to significant representation received by members on one off housing policy. Members were advised that they had adopted the draft plan & that the dates for adoption of the plan were set in legislation. Members suggested that a recent media announcement had suggested that the Minister was looking favourably on a change to the rural housing policy.

Council officials were requested to issue correspondence to all relevant bodies to query if there were any upcoming changes to the Rural Housing Policy, and to advise of the motion passed.

Members were advised that the closing date for submissions was in less than 48 hours, that the law did not allow amendments and that there was no time to change legislation but that a second letter could issue to the Minister from CE office expressing the sentiments of the debate.

Minute No. 200/20

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. Paddy McQuillan

Seconded by Cllr. Maeve Yore

“Requesting that Louth County Council write to the Ministers for Justice, Finance and Public Expenditure to make provisions where monies confiscated under the Proceeds of Crime Legislation be redirected from central coffers back into local addiction services, youth organisations, and community initiatives to combat the effect of addiction on our communities, and that the necessary legislation is changed as a matter of urgency to allow this vital funding support to happen.”

Reply:

This is a matter for the members.

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Members requested that all local authorities receive notice of this passed motion requesting support.

Members also requested that reps are made to Minister for Justice Helen McEntee by Louth County Council on this item.

Minute No. 201/20

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. Sean Kelly

Seconded by Cllr. Andrea McKevitt

"Given the ongoing failure to recruit sufficient retained Fire fighters nationwide and allowing for the part-time salary and time commitment associated with the role, that Louth County Council write to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform asking that members of the public service be allowed to apply for and hold a position as a retained Fire fighter while remaining to work in the public service in the interest of public safety."

Reply:

This is a matter for the members.

Members noted that Louth was the second highest Emergency Responder in Ireland and observed a national crisis in recruiting and retaining retained fire personnel.

Minute No. 202/20

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. Pio Smith

Seconded by Cllr. Maeve Yore

"This Council welcomes and supports the recent announcement by the Minister for Defence that an Independent Review Board will be appointed to examine all aspects of the battle of Jadotville involving A Company, 35th Infantry Battalion of the Irish Defence Forces ONUC contingent. Furthermore, we ask that the review board include expert historians, professional military personnel including a senior non commissioned officer and that the review will examine and report on the psychological effects of the battle on the military personnel involved"

Reply:

This is a matter for the members.

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Members noted the importance of recognition for both those who had died and the survivors of the battle of Jadotville.

Minute No. 203/20

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. John Sheridan

Seconded by Cllr. Tom Cunningham

"That Louth County Council assesses the extent of recycling bins marked for clothing located in the county on both public and private land. That the Council circulate information to members on whether permission is required for these bins, many of which are beside bottle banks on the public realm. That the council clarify the procedure for bins being put in situ and if a CHY number issued by the Charities Regulator is required and/or if the Council investigates or verifies the bona fides of these clothing bins in order to protect charities who are legitimately seeking donations of clothing."

Reply from Catherine Duff, Director of Services, Operations:

Louth County Council will develop a register of approved clothes banks on public lands. Consent is required for the use of public lands. The Council does remove banks on public lands not identified as being operated by bona fide charities or without appropriate identification located on their surfaces. There is no specific application form and applications in the past were dealt with on an individual basis. There have been no applications in recent years. Complaints in regard to private lands are dealt with by the Litter wardens.

Members thanked council staff for creation of the bring bank register and suggested that this be circulated to all councillors. It was suggested that strict rules need to be employed in any procedure around the schedule of bin emptying, cleaning of litter around bin area, maximum number of bins per area etc.

Minute No. 204/20

Motions from other Councils

Motions from other Councils as listed with the Agenda were noted by the members

That concluded the business of the meeting

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

Date:

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Cathaoirleach:

Meetings Administrator:
