

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting hosted in St. Gerard's Hall, Dundalk and held remotely over MS Teams on Monday 20th September 2021

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Pio Smith

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, Paula Butterly, James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Emma Coffey, , Edel Corrigan, Tom Cunningham, Maria Doyle, Michelle Hall, Conor Keelan, Fiachra MacRaghnaill, Pearse McGeough, Andrea McKeivitt, Kevin Meenan, Dolores Minogue, Declan Power, Liam Reilly (Remote), Tomás Sharkey, John Sheridan, Pio Smith, Jim Tenanty, Eileen Tully, Antoin Watters, Maeve Yore

All Councillors attended in person apart from Liam Reilly.

Apologies: Councillors: Kevin Callan, Paddy McQuillan, John Reilly

Officials: Chief Executive - Joan Martin,
Directors of Services – Joe McGuinness, Paddy Donnelly, & Frank Pentony, Catherine Duff
Head of Finance – Bernie Woods,
Senior Planner – Joanna Kelly,
Senior Engineer – John O'Hagan
Turlough King – SEP
Marguerite Quinn – SEP

Meetings Administrator – Gráinne Tuomey.

Remote Attendees Staff Officer – Emma Eaton, Acting Head of IT – Helen Divilly.

Minute No. 150/21

Confirmation of Minutes

Proposed by: Cllr. M. Yore

Seconded by: Cllr. Joanna Byrne

And resolved:

That the minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 19th July be confirmed

Minute No. 151/21

Matters Arising

The following amendments were requested to Minutes
Minute 130/21 – Representatives from Sinn Fein also spoke in reference to respects for Cllr. Hugh Conlon.

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021

Minute No. 152/21

Etiquette of Meeting

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Smith advised Members of current restrictions limiting the meeting to 1hr 50mins, and of Covid safety measures to be employed during the meeting. He also advised that the structure of the meeting would be amended to hear the most discussed items last before notices, i.e. the CE Report and Co. Dev. Plan discussion.

Minute No. 153/21

Condolences

Following the Condolence Protocol, Members expressed sympathy to the friends and family of:

Des Keane, former Staff Member of Louth County Council

Kevin Mulgrew, Community Activist and member of Louth Peace Partnership

Minute No. 154/21

District Meetings Minutes - Noted

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

Municipal District of Ardee Monthly Meeting held on 1st July 2021

Borough District of Drogheda Monthly Meeting held on 5th July 2021

Municipal District of Dundalk Monthly Meeting held on 6th July 2021

Minute No. 155/21

Committee Meetings Minutes - Noted

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

Corporate Policy Group 7th July 2021

Minute No. 156/21

Tuarascáil ó Chathaoirleach an Ghrúpa Beatais Corpaideach / Report from Chairperson of Corporate Policy Group

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that the meeting of the CPG was held in the Council chamber, at 9.00 am on Wednesday 7th July 2021 by zoom. Items discussed included:

- Publication of the Mother and Baby homes report but discussion deferred until October.
- Meeting formats and ongoing national discussions on same
- Progress on the County Development Plan

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021

- A report on pros and cons of webcasting
- The Members communication plan
- Attendance at SPCs

Minute No. 157/21

Tuarascail o Chathaoirligh an Choiste an Beartaqs Straiteiseach / Strategic Policy Committee Chairperson's Report

Report from Chairperson of Community, Quality of Life and Creativity SPC

Cllr Coffey informed the members that the meeting of the SPC was held on 15th September 2021 by zoom. Highlighted items included:

- A Healthy Ireland presentation received from Mark Garvey, Healthy Ireland Coordinator.
- Yvonne O'Brien, Co. Librarian advised of support for Healthy Ireland initiatives and suggested that the Library should be the go to place for health and wellbeing advice.
- Dr. Harry Barry Wellbeing talk through the library was referenced as particularly popular.
- Draft Works Programme commencing.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10th November

Report from Chairperson of the Housing SPC

Cllr Joanna Byrne informed the members that the meeting of the SPC was held on 14th September 2021 by zoom. Highlighted items included:

- An update from Edel O'Neil on Energy Efficiency upgrades to Social Houses which sees an investment of €1.4 m of Dept funding, to include improvement works including Windows and Doors, Attic insulation, renewable lighting.
- A presentation from Brona O'Reilly, Administrative Office on the Transfer Policy and the addition of mental health as a qualifier for application

The next meeting is scheduled for 9th November, and may be in person dependant on remaining restrictions being lifted.

Report from Chairperson of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC

Cllr Pio Smith informed the members that the meeting of the SPC was held on 7th September 2021 by zoom. Highlighted items included:

- A presentation from Willie Walsh, SEO, on Casual Trading Byelaws and identification of a number of suitable locations
- Colette Moss provided an update on Tourism in Co. Louth
- A briefing on Westgate Vision was received.

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021
Minute No. 158/21

Casual Vacancy of Elected Member – Cllr. Hugh Conlon RIP

In accordance with the provisions of Section 19 (3) of the Local Government Act 2001, a casual vacancy occurred in the membership of Louth County Council by reason of the death of Cllr. Hugh Conlon (RIP).

It was

Proposed by Cllr. Jim Tenanty,

Seconded by Cllr. Maeve Yore,

And resolved that Ms. Bernie Conlon shall fill the casual vacancy on Louth County Council.

The Cathaoirleach, Chief Executive and members welcomed Cllr. Bernie Conlon and wished her well. Cllr. Conlon thanked Members for the nomination and for recent sympathies extended to her. It was noted that the Municipal District of Ardee was now a Gender balanced district.

Minute No. 159/21

Approval of €5 million Overdraft Facility for 2022

Ms. Bernie Woods, Head of Finance, sought approval to extend the facility of a €5 million overdraft in the event that the council ever need to use this in 2022.

It was

Proposed by Cllr. Marianne Butler,

Seconded by Cllr. Jim Tenanty,

And resolved that the overdraft facility be extended.

Minute No. 160/21

To agree a date for the 2022 Annual Budget Meeting

Agreement to hold the budget meeting on the 15th November after the main monthly Council Meeting was

Proposed by Cllr. Jim Tenanty,

Seconded by Cllr. Michelle Hall,

And resolved

Minute No. 161/21

Amenity Grant Scheme 2021 – Late Applications for Approval

It was confirmed that acceptance of late applications would not become a standard item and agreement of approval of Late Applications was –

Proposed by: Cllr. Fiachra Mac Raghnaill

Seconded by: Cllr. Michelle Hall

And resolved

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021
Minute No. 162/21

Allocations of Members Community Grants

Approval of the allocation of Members Community Grants as circulated with the agenda was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore

Seconded by: Cllr. John Sheridan

And resolved:

Minute No. 163/21

Consideration of the Chief Executive's Report on submissions on the Material Amendments to the Draft Development Plan

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pio Smith reminded Members of the email received from the Chief Executive and advised of a discussion held at the CPG regarding the impact of delaying the plan.

The Chief Executive advised Members that she could not see any valid reason why they could delay the plan at this point with two weeks to go. Following some discussion on this item and clarification on some matters by the Senior Planner, Joanna Kelly, Cllr. Tomás Sharkey proposed to adjourn the item to an online meeting on Thursday 23rd September from 5.30pm to 8.30pm, with any necessary subsequent meetings to be agreed thereafter, and this was agreed. Members were requested to raise any queries in advance of the meeting on Thursday to planning to assist with a timely process.

Minute No. 164/21

Breithniú ar Thuarascálacha agus ar Chomhréitigh ón bPríomhfheidhmeannach / Consideration of Reports and Recommendations from Chief Executive

- Monthly Management Report
- Finance & Water Services
- Economic Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
- Operations & Waste Management
- Corporate & Emergency Services
- Housing & Quality of Life

Members discussed the report as issued and the following items were highlighted:

- Louth County Council had not been informed by Irish Water if they would form part of the water audit following issues at the weekend with contaminated supply affecting other counties.
- A request was made for Pamela Arthurs to talk to Members on Peace + funding.
- Details on proposed infrastructure and economic development themes of Peace + had not been launched so no commitment could be made on what could be applied for.
- Any discussions on water staff and associated works by Irish Water are being held at national level.
- Members were advised on threshold to carry out road works at night.
- 36 short term letting cases open – slow process to follow planning enforcement, some property owners have indicated they will rectify.

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021

- New Housing for All targets had not been received.
- Changes to circumstances can be considered on individual basis in rent reviews.
- Challenges to disabled grant funding and increasing applicants noted.
- Muslim Graveyard proposal update requested

Minute No. 165/21

As the time had reached 11:50 pm the Cathaoirleach declared the meeting over and the following motions were deferred to the next monthly meeting in October.

14.0 Notice of Motion - Cllr. Paula Butterly

Seconded by:

That Louth County Council establishes an Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Committee.

The Agriculture and Fisheries sectors support thousands of jobs in the County and their combined value of output was circa €126m in 2020, equating to in excess of €180m in value of exports. Such a committee would allow crucial stakeholders to contribute to debates and proposals regarding environmental, economic and educational issues relative and specific to these sectors and their communities.

Key Objectives:

- 1. Environmental - that the next generation inherits a better County to the previous one.*
- 2. Education - promote, inform and educate on the importance of good food, its origins and its links to good health.*
- 3. Bridge the divide between the urban and rural communities.*
- 4. Sustainable Rural life - ensure that rural communities remain financially and economically viable, that communities continue to prosper and grow.*

Similar committees have been established within Donegal County Council and are proving to be successful.

15.0 Notice of Motion - Cllr. Tomas Sharkey

Seconded by:

"In respect of the financial costs incurred by LCC by giving cash flow support to the 2018 and 2019 Fleadh Committee, this council require a report to be issued by the Chief Executive outlining what steps were taken to comply with Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001 and specifically"

(7) Where the manager has incurred additional expenditure under subsection (6), or to which a scheme under subsection (4) applies, he or she shall inform—

(a) without delay, the Cathaoirleach of the fact, and

(b) the members of the local authority of the fact at the next practicable meeting of the local authority following the incurring of additional expenditure, giving details of the additional expenditure and its implications for the local authority budget."

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021

16.0 Notice of Motion - Cllr. Emma Coffey

Seconded by:

That Louth County Council give their support in the DKIT s.38 TU ACT application in obtaining University Status and ensuring that it becomes the 1st choice third level learning institution in the North East

17.0 Notice of Motion - Cllr. John Sheridan

Seconded by:

"To ask what the cost of the junction realignments in November 2020 at Sláns pub Annagassan and at Dillonstown church? What arrangements are made with the relevant stakeholders around the cost of the second realignment in June 2021 given it had to be realigned so soon after the first time it was done."

18.0 Notice of Motion - Cllr. Pearse McGeough

Seconded by

At July's meeting of the Ardee Municipal I was informed that the outlay for the junction at Annagassan will cost €200,000.

As you can appreciate, I am concerned at this figure and require the following:

- 1. Can I have a breakdown of this figure?*
- 2. How much was spent on the second realignment to fix the 'upgrade'?*
- 3. Were the same designers and on-site Company involved in both realignments?*
- 4. Is there any insurance or clawback available to offset the cost of the second realignment as it was to fix an unsatisfactory or 'botched' job?*

19.0 Notice of Question Cllr. Pio Smith

Noted

"To ask the Local Authority to provide a list of all funding applications made by the Local Authority in 2020"

20.0 Notice of Question - Cllr. Tomas Sharkey

Noted

How many notices in writing have been issued by Louth County Council since January 2020 relevant to the Roads Act 1993 Section 76 detailed below?

(5) The owner or occupier of any land adjacent to a public road shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that

(a) water is not prevented, obstructed or impeded from draining into, onto, under, through or to his land from a public road,

Minutes of Council Meeting September 2021

(b) water, soil or other material is prevented from flowing or falling onto a public road from his land.

(6) A road authority may serve a notice in writing on the owner or occupier of any land adjacent to a public road requiring him to carry out specified works or take specified measures—

1. to ensure that water is not prevented, obstructed or impeded from draining into, onto, under, through or to his land from a public road,
2. to prevent water, soil or other material from flowing or falling onto a public road from his land.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

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

Date: _____

Cathaoirleach: _____

Meetings Administrator: _____