

Louth County Council Monthly Meeting 19th of December 2022

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber Co. Hall, Dundalk on Monday 19th of December at 10.00 a.m.

In attendance:

Presiding: Councillor, Conor Keelan - Cathaoirleach

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Emma Coffey, Edel Corrigan, Tom Cunningham, Maria Doyle, Seán Kelly, Fiachra Mac Raghnaill, Pearse McGeough, Paddy McQuillan, Kevin Meenan, Declan Power, John Reilly, Tomás Sharkey, John Sheridan, Pío Smith, Eileen Tully, Antoin Watters, Maeve Yore.

Apologies: Councillors: Paula Butterly, Bernie Conlon, Michelle Hall, Andrea McKeivitt, Dolores Minogue, Liam Reilly, Jim Tenanty.

Officials: Joan Martin, Chief Executive
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services
Gráinne Tuomey, Meeting Administrator
Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services
Bernie Woods, Director of Services
Catherine Duff, Director of Services
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Service
John O'Hagan, Senior Engineer
Joanna Kelly, Senior Planner
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer

Minute No. 199/22

Expression of Sympathy for Private Seán Rooney, RIP

An Cathaoirleach, Conor Keelan called for suspension of standing orders to allow for expressions of sympathy for Pte Seán Rooney who had recently been killed on active duty while peace keeping in Lebanon. Representatives of all political parties and non-party Members extended their condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Pte Rooney whose home unit was in Aiken Barracks Dundalk and who grew up in Dundalk. Members spoke of the shock to the family and town, particularly at this time of year, how well liked Seán Rooney was and how proud the family were of his role in the Defence Forces and peacekeeping. The Chief Executive speaking on behalf of herself, and the staff of Louth County Council spoke of a close working relationship between LCC and

Aiken Barracks staff and advised of having contacted the 27th Battalion to offer any assistance possible for funeral arrangements.

A minute's silence was held.

Minute No. 200/22

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting on Monday 21st of November 2022 were

Proposed by: Cllr. Seán Kelly

Seconded by: Cllr. John Sheridan
and adopted.

Minute No. 201/22

Minutes of the Louth County Council Budget Meeting on Monday 21st of November 2022 were

Proposed by: Cllr. Marianne Butler

Seconded by: Cllr. Tomás Sharkey
and adopted.

Minute No. 202/22

Minutes of Municipal District Meetings – Noted

The following Minutes were Noted by Members:

- Municipal District of Ardee 2023 Budget Plan Meeting 17th October 2022
- Municipal District of Dundalk 1st November 2022
- Municipal District of Ardee 3rd November 2022
- Borough District of Drogheda 7th November 2022
- Municipal District of Ardee Special Meeting on 21st November 2022

Minute No. 203/22

Minutes of Committee Meetings – Noted

The following Minutes were Noted by Members:

- Corporate Policy Group Meeting 9th November 2022
- Audit Committee Meeting 10th November 2022

Minute No. 204/22

Report from Chairperson of Corporate Policy Group –

An Cathaoirleach Cllr Keelan advised Members that the CPG meeting was held in person at 9.00 am on Wednesday 7 December in the Setanta Room, County Hall.

Members were given a briefing on all items in the Council Agenda including (but not exclusively):

- Resolution sought on a replacement for the LMETB board member following Cllr Antóin Watter's resignation – as this was filled initially through a grouping system, the nomination must be from the group
- Parking Byelaws which is different from those brought before the MDs of Dundalk and Drogheda as it includes all parking areas including that in Drogheda imposing a new charge to be withheld for discretionary funding
- Possible replacement resolution for East Border Region member following recent resignation from Board

Other items were discussed including:-

The need to first log issues on Sugar in order that responses can be monitored

Minute No. 205/22

Report from Chairperson of Strategic Policy Committee -

Cllr Pío Smith advised Members the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC had been held on Tuesday 22nd November 2022.

Items discussed included:

- Derelict Sites and Vacant Sites
- LECP Steering Committee and involvement of MDs in same
- Tourism initiatives including SEALouth, Destination Towns and Shop Front Improvement Grants

Members were reminded that the appointment of staff including any Tourist Officer is an Executive Function.

Upcoming workshops were explored.

Minute No. 206/22

Replacement Nomination to the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board

In accordance with **Schedule 10 - paragraph 4(4)** (*which refers to nominations or appointments to bodies*), and **Schedule 10 paragraph 18** (*which sets out the right to form groups for certain appointments*) of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, a grouping who originally nominated and appointed Cllr Watters to the LMETB, were requested to nominate a replacement for Cllr Watters place following his resignation from the board.

Cllr Kevin Meenan was:

Proposed by: Cllr Pearse McGeough

Seconded by: Cllr Joanna Byrne

And deemed appointed by the group (as made up of Cllrs Watters, Meenan, Joanna Byrne, Sharkey, Corrigan and McGeough) as the representative to replace the casual vacancy created by the resignation of Cllr Antóin Watters on the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board.

Minute No. 207/22

Approval of Attendance at Conferences

Approval of attendances at Conferences as notified to the Elected Members was

Proposed by: Cllr Pio Smith

Seconded by: Cllr John Reilly

And Resolved.

Minute No. 208/22

Allocation of Members Community Grants

In accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, approval of Allocation of Members Community Grants as notified to the Elected Members was

Proposed by: Cllr Pio Smith

Seconded by: Cllr John Reilly

And Resolved.

Minute No. 209/22

Consideration of Annual Financial Statement 2021 and Auditor's Report under Section 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014

Members noted the AFS, the Report of the Local Government Auditor, and the Audit Committee Report as presented to them. Queries raised by Members were responded to by Bernie Woods, Head of Finance.

Minute No. 210/22

Louth County Council Car Park (Parking Fee Amendment) Bye-Laws 2022 – For Adoption under Section 101 of the Road Traffic Act, 1961, as amended

In Accordance with Section 101 of the Road Traffic Act, 1961 adoption of **Louth County Council Car Park (Parking Fee Amendment) Bye-Laws 2022**, was

Proposed by: Cllr Kevin Callan

Seconded by: Cllr Fiachra Mac Raghnaill

And resolved

Minute No. 211/22

Notice under Section 183 - Proposed Disposal of land at Drumnasillagh, Dundalk, Co Louth

In accordance with S183(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, it was agreed the **disposal of Lands at Drumnasillagh, Dundalk, Co Louth** shall be carried out in accordance with terms specified in the resolution.

This was:

Proposed by: Cllr Eileen Tully

Seconded by: Cllr John Reilly

And Resolved.

Minute No. 212/22

Notice under Section 183 - Proposed Disposal of lands at Junction 20, Flurry River, Dromad, Co. Louth.

In accordance with S183(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, it was agreed the **disposal of lands at Junction 20, Flurry River, Dromad, Co. Louth** shall be carried out in accordance with terms specified in the resolution.

This was:

Proposed by: Cllr Antóin Watters

Seconded by: Cllr Pio Smith

And Resolved.

Minute No. 213/22

Vacancy on East Border Region arising from resignation of Cllr. Paula Butterly from the Committee

Following a request by Cllr John Reilly to defer this item until the next meeting in order to allow Cllr Butterly attend and participate, which was supported by Cllr Yore, it was agreed to defer this item until January 2023.

Minute No. 214/22

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

Monthly Management Report

- Support Services
- Strategic Economic Development
- Placemaking & Physical Development
- Organisational Development
- Social Development

Prior to discussion of the report the Cathaoirleach advised Members that the Chief Executive, Joan Martin, wished to speak.

The Chief Executive advised that following highly productive meetings of staff with the Department, Louth County Council have received some particularly good news that

legacy land loans are to be funded by the Department of Housing. The first tranche of funding will cover lands at the Point Road, remainder of Dunleer lands and Ballymakenny West. Separate funding will be made available for Ballymakenny East, Louth Village and Greenhills, with stage 4 approval funding Mount Avenue and Boice Court Drogheda. It is expected that the council will receive back funding for the vast bulk of land loans which will make an enormous difference to the financial outlook of Louth County Council.

She advised that Conditions will be attached to the funding including extended funding timelines for some and a requirement to build a considerable number of houses. It is considered that the funding will take the pressure of internal capital receipts which can then be used to fund other items.

A paper on same will be brought to the councillors early in the new year, most likely at the February meeting.

Members welcomed the news as issued and made some suggestions on how to spend the ICRs.

Returning to the Chief Executive report, Members discussed the report as issued and the following items were highlighted:

Support Services

- Continuous water supply and pressure issues were cited. Members were urged to keep reporting water issues directly to Irish Water, but issues raised will again be brought to Irish Water attention
- The future framework for water service staffing is expected to commence early in 2023, discussions are ongoing

Strategic Economic Development

- Louth County Council are closely coordinating with Kildare County Council on St. Brigid's Day festival, most efforts are aimed at building to the 1500 celebration in 2024. Updates will issue on monthly CE Report
- An issues paper is to be finalised by Meath and Louth County Council before a non-statutory consultation phase of a joint local area plan commences in the New Year, which will then lead to the statutory local area plan process
- IDA are carrying out a survey of the IDA park lands in North Drogheda to inform future plans
- Individual breaches of planning conditions on development lands should be logged with planning enforcement who will investigate
- No update is currently available on the transfer of Short-Term Leasing oversight to Fáilte Ireland
- Public consultation will be sought on management plans for the headland at Clogherhead

- Louth County Council are displaying the maps of residential zoned lands under Finance Act legislation. Revenue is the authorised body for enforcement of the legislation. Local Property Tax properties are exempt from RZLT

Placemaking & Physical Development

- Traffic calming measures are prioritised based on road safety accident statistics, a request for works to the R168 will be examined to see if it meets threshold
- Winter gritting is improved in 2022 as 6 trucks are on road from 2 bases. Individual requests for sand/salt/grit banks in ungritted areas where locals are willing to assist safety measures will be considered
- Updates were given on Narrowwater Bridge, proposed CFRAM at Bellagan / Bellurgan, Boyne Enterprise Link Road, St Nicholas Quarter, Omeath Greenway and Drogheda Destination Town signage plans
- Funding for Harbour works was welcomed

Organisational Development

- Out of hours services is outsourced and were extremely busy due to inclement weather at the weekend, nevertheless undue waiting time reported was unacceptable and will be investigated
- MyWaste team member vacancy will be filled in 2023

Social Development

- A recent announcement to 50 Ukrainian refugees that they would have to move from the Crowne Plaza to Killarney was heavily condemned. A stay of execution for 2 weeks was noted but considered insufficient as the residents are settled in schools and in the community. Louth County Council while housing almost 200 Ukrainian refugees were not party to the housing of those in the Crowne Plaza and do not have any role or responsibility relating to their move
- Any householders adversely affected by removal of housing list due to income increase during the change of income limits may be reconsidered on evidence of same. However, the income is looked at over a 12-month period
- Onus is on housing applicant to keep in touch with the Housing authorities

Minute No. 215/22

**Notice of Motion: Cllr. John Reilly
Seconded by Cllr Eileen Tully**

“For Louth County Council to phase out the use of fossil fuels in their commercial vehicles over the course of 2023 and to be replaced with HVO biodiesel as a green alternative to fossil fuels making Louth County Council one of the first in Ireland to drastically reduce their carbon footprint”.

Reply: Joe McGuinness, Director of Organisational Development

Louth County Council is a project partner on the Shared Island funded project “Feasibility study for LA’s to develop zero carbon HGV roadmaps”; which has recently received €150,000 funding.

- *Monaghan County Council (Project Lead)*
- *Newry Mourne and Down District Council*
- *Ards and North Down Borough Council*
- *Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council*
- *East Border Region*

Assisted by:

- *Belfast Metropolitan College*
- *Hydrogen Ireland*

This project aims to assist Local Authorities to develop their own zero carbon HGV roadmaps. Fuel is the second largest energy user for Local Authorities in Ireland (ROI and NI). Trucks are the highest energy users (and carbon emissions) of our fleets. Public Bodies are obliged to reduce energy emissions by 50% by 2030. There is a need to identify a renewable energy option for powering large trucks, which is compatible with our 2030 energy emission targets. Large trucks (over 6.5T) are not yet suitable for electrification, so alternative methods must be examined.

Specific Outputs – A feasibility study with the following deliverables:

- 1. an investigation of what the market has available at present for trucks to eliminate or at least substantially reduce carbon emissions;*
- 2. identify suitable or potential sustainable energy sources for trucks used by partner Local Authority fleets;*
- 3. Participation on three knowledge awareness visits to explore best practice. Potential locations include; Wight Bus, Aberdeen Council, ITM Sheffield.*
- 4. focus on sustainable energy systems that create new local jobs;*
- 5. proposals to eliminate or at least substantially reduce the dependence on imported fossil fuels. Estimate how much reduction of imported fuel could be obtained from implementation of the recommended solution.*

A Project Steering Committee will be established comprising senior staff from all project partners which will meet on a bi-monthly basis throughout the implementation of the project.

Proposed Timetable:

- *Project Start Date: September 2022*
- *Project End Date: August 2023*

It is anticipated the HVO will be considered as part of this study and Louth County Council will be guided by the outcome of this study and ongoing sectoral advice.

Speaking on the motion Cllr Reilly strongly encouraged Louth County Council to fly the flag for other councils and immediately adopt a policy of using biodiesel. He stated that 12 trucks using biodiesel emitted the same carbon footprint of 1 truck using standard diesel

Cllr Mac Raghnaill which supporting the sentiment of climate action raised concerns about the council being reliant solely on one particular form of fossil fuel that could be subject to restrictions etc.

Minute No. 216/22

Motions from other Councils – Noted

- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council - Justice for Noah Donohoe dated 10th October 2022

Minute No. 217/22

An Cathaoirleach wished everyone a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year and as there was no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date:

16 Jan 2023

Cathaoirleach:

Caoimhe Keelan

Meeting Administrator:

Aisling Quinlan