



Comhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

## **Louth County Council July Meeting**

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber of Co. Hall, Dundalk on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023, at 10:00a.m.

### **In Attendance:**

Presiding: Councillor, - Cathaoirleach Paula Butterly

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Bernie Conlon, Edel Corrigan, Tom Cunningham, Emma Cutlip, Michelle Hall, Conor Keelan, Pearse McGeough, Andrea McKevitt, Paddy McQuillan, Kevin Meenan, Dolores Minogue, Robert Nash, Declan Power, John Reilly, Liam Reilly, Tomás Sharkey, Jim Tenanty Eileen Tully, Maeve Yore

Apologies: Councillors: Emma Coffey, Seán Kelly, John Sheridan, Pio Smith, Antóin Watters

Officials: Joan Martin, Chief Executive  
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services  
Gráinne Tuomey, Meeting Administrator  
Padraig Judge, A/Director of Services  
Bernie Woods, Director of Services  
Mark Johnston, A/Director of Services  
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Service  
Turlough King, Senior Executive Planner

### **Minute No. 121/23**

#### **Minutes of Special Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023**

Proposed by: Cllr. Emma Cutlip  
Seconded by: Cllr. Andrea McKevitt  
And Approved

### **Minute No. 122/23**

#### **Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

Proposed by: Cllr. Bernie Conlon  
Seconded by: Cllr. Andrea McKevitt  
And Approved

**Minute No. 123/23**

**Minutes from Monthly Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Dolores Minogue  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. John Reilly  
And Approved

**Minute No. 124/23**

**Minutes of District Meetings – Noted**

- Municipal District of Dundalk 2nd May 2023
- Borough District of Drogheda 8th May 2023
- Municipal District of Dundalk Annual Meeting 6th June 2023
- Municipal District of Dundalk Meeting 6th June 2023
- Borough District of Drogheda Annual Meeting 12th June 2023
- Borough District of Drogheda Meeting 12th June 2023

**Minute No. 125/23**

**Minutes of Committee Meetings – Noted**

- Audit Committee Meeting 26th January 2023
- Audit Committee Meeting 20th April 2023

**Minute No. 126/23**

**Report from Chairpersons of Strategic Policy Committees**

No meetings were held since last monthly Council Meeting.

**Minute No. 127/23**

**Louth County Council, Housing Estates Special Speed Limit Draft Bye Laws 2022 – deferred from June meeting.**

Director of Services Joe McGuinness advised members that having checked legislation on queries raised at the last meeting, he was satisfied that additional estates could not be included in the Bye Laws without this going out again on Public Consultation. He further advised that it was not within the power of the Members to introduce speed limits less than 30kph. He suggested that the Bye Laws might be best adopted now to allow the estates listed to commence the lower limits of 30kph, and that a review could then commence to include any other estates.

Adoption of the Bye Laws as presented to Members was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. James Byrne  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Marianne Butler  
And Resolved.

**Minute No. 128/23**

**Freastal ar Chomhdhálacha a Cheadú / Approval of Attendance at Conferences**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Kevin Callan  
And resolved

**Minute No. 129/23**

**Allocation of Members Community Grants provided for under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Kevin Callan  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Eileen Tully  
And resolved

**Minute No. 130/23**

**Nominations to the board of the Droichead Arts Centre**

Arising from the recent resignation of Cllr. Joanna Byrne from the Board of Droichead Arts Centre a nomination was sought from Members to fill the vacancy. **Cllr. Michelle Hall** was nominated as her replacement. This was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Emma Cutlip  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Marianne Butler  
And resolved.

**Minute No. 131/23**

**Vacancy – Membership of the Local Community Development Committee**

A vacancy on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) occurred by reason of resignation of Ms. Anne Keeley as Department of Social Protection representative. Ms. Sharon Curran has been nominated as the new Department of Social Protection representative.

Acceptance of the nomination of Ms. Sharon Curran was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Marianne Butler  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Dolores Minogue  
And resolved.

**Minute No. 132/23**

**Vacancy – Membership of the Placenames Committee**

A vacancy on the Placenames Committee occurred by reason of resignation of Ms. Breeda Tuite who represented the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society (CLAHS). Members were advised that Ms. Róisín McHugh has been nominated by the County Louth Archaeologic and Historical Society as their new representative. Acceptance of the nomination of Ms. Róisín McHugh was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Marianne Butler  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Michelle Hall  
And resolved.

#### **Minute No. 133/23**

#### **Drogheda Elected Member Representative Vacancy – Membership of the Placenames Committee**

Arising from the recent resignation of Cllr. Fiachra Mac Raghnaill from Louth County Council, a nomination was sought from Members to fill his vacancy on the Placenames Committee.

Members were advised that any nominee should be an Elected Member from the Borough District of Drogheda, as the Placenames Committee has one Representative from each of the three Municipal Districts.

**Cllr. Emma Cutlip** was nominated as the Drogheda replacement. This was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Michelle Hall  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Joanna Byrne  
And resolved.

#### **Minute No. 133A/23**

#### **Section 183 - Proposed Disposal of lands at Aisling Park, Demesne, Dundalk**

Members were advised that the proposed disposal of lands at Aisling Park, Demesne, Dundalk, Co. Louth under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 was to facilitate an ESB substation which would provide power for Social Housing Units.

Approval of the Disposal as presented to Members was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Liam Reilly  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Marianne Butler  
And resolved

#### **Minute No. 134/23**

#### **Section 141 Reports 2023 - Compliance with Section 141 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended**

Members were reminded that in compliance with S141 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended Elected Members are required to report on the activities and operations of Bodies, Boards and Committees to which they are elected, appointed or nominated to represent Louth County Council, annually or if so requested by resolution or Cathaoirleach.

No reports were given. Cllr. Cunningham was advised that the Executive were trying to establish why the Rural Water Programme had not held any meetings.

## **Consideration of Reports and Recommendations from Chief Executive Monthly Management Report**

Members considered the Report as presented to them, raised questions and received responses from the Executive.

The following items in particular were highlighted under the relevant Directorates:

### **Support Services**

Each Director reports on the risk register for their Directorate to the Audit Committee annually. The Audit Committee also has sight of the overall Corporate Risk Register for Louth County Council. There is a difference in opinion between the Executive and the Audit Committee as to whether the SICAP audit should be brought before the Audit Committee as SICAP is a function of the LCDC and not the Council.

### **Strategic Economic Development**

- An additional full-time Tourism Officer for the County is to be recruited by Louth County Council. The successful applicant will work alongside the existing Tourism Officer to promote Louth and will also coordinate with bordering counties to work on larger promotion of the area. The existing Tourism Officer had originally been employed by Fáilte Ireland and the then Chief Executive requested Dundalk BIDS to manage this post when the Fáilte Tourist Office closed.
- Interviews have recently been held for the Night Time Economy Advisor.
- An additional note on Vacant Properties will be input on the September Chief Executive Report.
- The Chief Executive clarified that Planning Applications can only be dealt with in strict adherence to planning legislation and the County Development Plan.
- Members welcomed new allocation of URDF funding for CPO or agreed purchase of vacant and derelict houses.
- The transfer of Dundalk Port portfolio to Louth County Council is currently under consideration of both Ministers of Housing and Transport. Any lands sold while under the ownership of Dundalk Port will remain in private ownership and this will not change. It was noted that CFRAM mitigation measures will apply to this area.
- Members were urged to report any dangerous buildings to Planning Enforcement. The onus is on the property owner to ensure that properties are safe, but Planning Staff can inspect and issue notice where necessary.

### **Placemaking & Physical Development**

- The Obelisk Bridge in Drogheda is to undergo full and major restoration works which will necessarily result in the closure of the road for an extended period. While it is accepted that works will cause disruption in the area the contractor will be required to provide a traffic management plan which can be reviewed to ensure that the least possible disruption. The €2m scheme provides for major structural works.
- Queries were raised on the colour of bins and slabs in the Drogheda area where it was understood that a bronze colour had been agreed under the Wayfinding plan.
- Updates to the Westgate Vision Website were requested.
- Some partial closure of Clogherhead Port is foreseen while works are carried out. Contractors are to work with fishermen to lessen disruption.

- Where road works are necessary late at night the Council will request contractors to give residents as much advance notice as possible and will similarly do the same for own Council works.
- The Chief Executive reminded Members of Louth County Council's commitment to Climate Action measures and to the National Pollinator Programme and advised of recruitment of a new Biodiversity Officer.
- The issue of illegal dumping was discussed. Three Draft Litter Management Plans, one for each district, are currently being reviewed and it is hoped to bring these to Members in September.

### **Organisational Development**

- It was noted that Period Poverty Products are now funded by the Dept., while Louth County Council have been running the scheme for many years previously. It was suggested that funds previously used by Louth County Council could be provided to fund Period Poverty Schemes for local Voluntary Groups or Charities. This will be discussed with the Healthy Ireland Coordinator.
- The challenge of meeting the Gap to Target Climate Action Measures was discussed. Members were reminded that they will be required to adopt a Climate Action Plan.
- Enforcement of the MyWaste scheme and inspection of Estates will be checked and notified to Members.

### **Social Development**

- Increased levels of rent arrears were noted from the previous month. Members were advised that the figures presented might not be fully reflective as there could be a delay in the report on those paying by Household Budget issuing to populate the Chief Executive report figure. The Executive advised that there is a good system in place to deal with individuals in arrears but is willing to review the process. A more detailed report will be considered to include breakdown of the number of warning letters, notice to quits issued.
- Successful grant applicants are being advised that if they are able to obtain their own OT report this may speed the administrative process up, this can then be recouped along with the grant.

### **Minute No. 136/23**

**Notice of Motion: Cllr. Kevin Callan**  
**Seconded by: Cllr. Joanna Byrne**

*Asking Louth County Council to carry out a survey of all structures which are in the control of the Council crossing the river Boyne in and through the town of Drogheda to ensure that these are marked and identifiable to swans. This motion comes at a time when the number injured swans which have been in contact with cables and wires that cross the river has reached a point where according to those involved in rescuing injured swans, there are no swans on the river from Drogheda to the mouth of the estuary.*

**Reply: Catherine Duff, Director of Place Making and Physical Development**

*There are only three Bridges crossing the Boyne in Louth with cables. Only Dominic's Bridge is in the control of Louth County Council and poses a negligible threat to swans in flight. However, High Voltage Power lines do cross the Boyne and are in control of ESB.*

LCC will write to ESB, TII and Scotch Hall highlighting the concerns raised.

Following some discussion on this item wherein a 2018 survey on reflective game guards was to be undertaken, the Executive agreed to confer with the National Parks and Wildlife Service on any mitigation measures.

**Minute No. 137/23**

**Notice of Motion: Cllr Maeve Yore**  
**Seconded by: Cllr. Bernie Conlon**

*“That Louth County Council supports all victims of child sexual abuse and condemns the current litigation strategy chosen by the Christian Brother Order as illustrated on RTE Prime Time 7 February 2023.*

*Furthermore that this Council writes to the Christian Brother leadership team condemning this litigation strategy.*

*Furthermore that this Council calls upon our members in the Borough District of Drogheda to rescind the Freedom of Drogheda bestowed on the former leader of the Christian Brothers, Edmund Garvey”.*

**Reply: Joe McGuinness, Director of Organisational Development**

*This is a matter for the members.*

**Minute No. 138/23**

**Amended Motion – Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan**  
**Seconded by: Cllr. Emma Cutlip**

**In accordance with Standing Order 16 (ii)(b) it was proposed to amend the motion by leaving out words and insert other words as follows:**

*“That Louth County Council supports all victims of child sexual abuse and condemns the current litigation strategy chosen by the Christian Brother Order as illustrated on RTE Prime Time 7 February 2023.*

*Furthermore that this Council writes to the Christian Brother leadership team condemning this litigation strategy.*

~~*REMOVED (Furthermore that this Council calls upon our members in the)*~~

*INSERTED (That this matter be put on the agenda of the) Borough District of Drogheda to rescind the Freedom of Drogheda bestowed on the former leader of the Christian Brothers, Edmund Garvey”.*

This was voted on as follows –

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Marianne Butler	1			
Paula Butterly	1			
James Byrne	1			
Joanna Byrne	1			

Kevin Callan	1			
Emma Coffey				1
Bernie Conlon		1		
Edel Corrigan	1			
Tom Cunningham				1
Emma Cutlip	1			
Michelle Hall	1			
Conor Keelan		1		
Sean Kelly				1
Pearse McGeough	1			
Andrea McKeivitt	1			
Paddy McQuillan	1			
Kevin Meenan	1			
Dolores Minogue	1			
Robert Nash	1			
Declan Power				1
John Reilly	1			
Liam Reilly	1			
Tomás Sharkey	1			
John Sheridan				1
Pio Smith				1
Jim Tenanty	1			
Eileen Tully	1			
Antóin Watters				1
Maeve Yore		1		
	19	3	0	7

And the motion was passed as follows-

***“That Louth County Council supports all victims of child sexual abuse and condemns the current litigation strategy chosen by the Christian Brother Order as illustrated on RTE Prime Time 7 February 2023.***

***Furthermore that this Council writes to the Christian Brother leadership team condemning this litigation strategy.***

***That this matter be put on the agenda of the Borough District of Drogheda to rescind the Freedom of Drogheda bestowed on the former leader of the Christian Brothers, Edmund Garvey”***

There was much discussion regarding this motion within the Chamber by Members. The Cathaoirleach reminded Members that this was a public meeting and cautioned that the Members did not have legal privilege within the Chamber. Public attendees were reminded of their requirement to remain silent.

Cllr Yore expressed disappointment that her original wording did not stand, while Cllrs. Callan and Cutlip had questioned the technical capacity of Louth County Council to attempt to rescind a decision of Drogheda Borough.

While a heated discussion ensued, all Members who spoke including Cllrs. Yore, McQuillan, Keelan, Meenan, Cutlip, Sharkey and Tully cited support for victims of sexual abuse and condemnation of the current litigation strategy of the Christian Brothers with Cllr Cutlip suggesting that the Supreme Court had a role to play by allowing such a loophole.

## Minute No. 139/23

### Suspension of Standing Orders in accordance with Standing Order No. 24

At 13.30hrs Members were asked if they wished to suspend standing orders in order to continue the meeting. They indicated that they did. The Meeting Administrator Gráinne Tuomey asked if there were any objectors to this as it required a two-thirds majority of those present to proceed. No member raised an objection and it was taken that all present were in favour of suspension of standing orders to continue the meeting.

## Minute No. 140/23

### Notice of Question: Cllr James Byrne – Noted

*"Can Louth County Council provide a breakdown of the planning permissions granted and refused since the adoption of the County Development Plan 2021-2027 to the present day for Rural Policy Zones 1 and 2 under each of the qualifying criteria applicable to both zones?"*

### Reply: Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services Strategic Economic Development

*The total number of planning permissions granted since the adoption of the County Development Plan 2021-2027 to the present day for Rural Policy Zones 1 and 2 is 77.*

*The total number of planning permissions refused since the adoption of the County Development Plan 2021-2027 to the present day for Rural Policy Zones 1 and 2 is 94.*

*Please see breakdown for Zone 1 and 2 below under each of the qualifying criteria.*

Zone 1						
	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6
Grant	3	4	0	0	1	0
Refuse	2	15	1	0	1	1

Zone 2								
	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6	Criteria 7	Criteria 8
Grant	5	3	19	40	0	0	1	1
Refuse	3	0	23	42	3	1	0	2

## Minute No. 141/23

### Notice of Question: Cllr Conor Keelan – Noted

*"Since the launch of Housing For All how many acquisitions have been made by Louth County Council?"*

### Reply: Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services Social Development

*Since HFA was launched in September 2021 the LCC had 150 Acquisitions made up as follows:*

- Turnkeys 50
- Part V Turnkeys 53
- CPO 3
- Second hand Acquisitions 44

In addition, the AHB's have delivered 377 units since Sept 2021.

### Minute No. 142/23

#### Correspondence Noted

- Wicklow County Council 12th June 2023
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland 19th June 2023
- Wexford County Council 29th June 2023
- Lord Mayor of Dublin & Dublin City Council 4th April 2023
- Office of the Minister 10th July 2023
- Letter to Minister Darragh O'Brien 22nd June 2023
- Letter to Minister Paschal Donohue 22nd June 2023
- Letter to Minister Darragh O'Brien 22nd June 2023

### Minute No. 143/23

#### Condolences

Members expressed condolences to:

- Senator John McGahon and family on the death of his mother

### Minute No. 144/23

#### AOB

Head of Finance Bernie Woods requested that Members attend a budget workshop following the September Monthly meeting, with lunch to be provided. Acceptance of this was proposed by Cllr. Joanna Byrne and seconded by Cllr. Liam Reilly and agreed to by Members.

There being no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date:

18 Sept 2023

Cathaoirleach:

Paula Bennett

Meeting Administrator:

A. G. G. G.