



Comhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

## **Louth County Council October Meeting**

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Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber of Co. Hall, Dundalk on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023, at 10:00a.m.

### **In Attendance:**

**Presiding:** Leas-Chathaoirleach Andrea McKevitt

**Members:** Councillors: Marianne Butler, Joanna Byrne, Emma Coffey, Bernie Conlon, Edel Corrigan, Tom Cunningham, Michelle Hall, Conor Keelan, Seán Kelly, Pearse McGeough, Andrea McKevitt, Paddy McQuillan, Kevin Meenan, Robert Nash, Declan Power, Liam Reilly John Sheridan, Pio Smith, Jim Tenanty, Eileen Tully, Antóin Watters,

**Apologies:** Councillors: Paula Butterly, James Byrne, Kevin Callan, Emma Cutlip, Dolores Minogue, John Reilly, Tomás Sharkey, Maeve Yore

**Officials:** Joan Martin, Chief Executive  
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services  
Gráinne Tuomey, Meeting Administrator  
Bernie Woods, Director of Services  
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Service  
David Jones, Director of Services  
Ger Murphy, Director of Services  
Joanna Kelly, Senior Planner  
John O'Hagan, Senior Engineer  
John Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer  
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer  
Róisín McAuley, Financial Accountant  
Brian Lynch, Financial Accountant

**Minute No. 167/23**

**Minutes from Monthly Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Seán Kelly

**Seconded by:** Cllr Eileen Tully

**And Approved**

## **Minute No. 168/23**

### **Matters Arising**

None raised.

## **Minute No. 169/23**

### **Minutes of District Meetings – Noted**

- Municipal District of Ardee Annual Meeting 1st June 2023
- Borough District of Drogheda 4th September 2023
- Municipal District of Dundalk 5th September 2023
- Municipal District of Ardee 7th September 2023

## **Minute No. 170/23**

### **Minutes of Committee Meetings – Noted**

- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022
- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023
- Corporate Policy Group 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023
- Climate Change and Energy SPC 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023
- Corporate Policy Group 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023

## **Minute No. 171/23**

### **Report from Chairpersons of Corporate Policy Group**

As the Cathaoirleach was absent and the Leas-Chathaoirleach does not attend CPG meetings, the report was deferred to the next meeting.

## **Minute No. 172/23**

### **Report from Chairpersons of Strategic Policy Committees**

Reports were given on the following SPC meetings by respective Chairs of SPC

- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC Meeting of 13th September 2022 by Cllr Pio Smith
- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC Meeting of 31st January 2023 by Cllr Pio Smith
- Community, Quality of Life and Creativity SPC Meeting of 13th September 2023 by Cllr Seán Kelly
- Climate Action and Energy SPC Meeting of 21st August 2023 by Cllr Liam Reilly

Council Members were updated on items discussed and presentations given at all meetings.

### **Minute No. 173/23**

#### **Approval of €5 million Overdraft Facility for 2024 under Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001**

Head of Finance Bernie Woods requested Members approve the facility to draw down an overdraft for up to €5million in 2024 and explained that this was fully recoupable to support cash flow prior to draw down of grant funding.

Approval of the Overdraft Facility was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Marianne Butler

**Seconded by:** Cllr Antóin Watters

And resolved.

### **Minute No. 174/23**

#### **Freastal ar Chomhdhála a Cheadú / Approval of Attendance at Conferences**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Emma Coffey

**Seconded by:** Cllr Marianne Butler

And resolved

### **Minute No. 175/23**

#### **Allocation of Members Community Grants provided for under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001 including late applications for the Amenity Grants Scheme**

Approval of the grants as presented on the agenda before them was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Emma Coffey

**Seconded by:** Cllr Pio Smith

And resolved

### **Minute No. 176/23**

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

Reports on meetings of the following bodies were presented by the following Members

- Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance from Cllr Pio Smith
- Drogheda BIDS from Cllr Pio Smith
- Local Authority Members Association from Cllr Eileen Tully as emailed to Members by Joe McGuinness

### **Minute No. 177/23**

#### **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**

- No queries raised

### **Strategic Economic Development**

- A significant increase in commencement notices was noted. Data will be examined to see if it is possible to give more detail in the report given
- Dunleer Fire Station – the Design Team is appointed and have met a number of times with physical development staff
- Residential Zoned Land Tax RZLT replaced the Vacant Property Tax and is administered by the Revenue Commissioner
- Members queries on planning issues should be put in writing and logged on the Call Management System in the first instance
- Dundalk Harbour Transfer of ownership is not complete
- The CFRAM (Catchment Flood Risk Area Management) Scheme was set up to address possible flood areas
- Land title issues of individuals is a Civil Matter
- Shared Island project is progressing and expands on the established coordination and collaboration between Newry Mourne Down County Councils and Louth County Council. A deadline of end of November is set
- Louth and Meath County Councils are to meet in coming weeks to discuss a commencement issues paper for the Drogheda Local Area Plan
- The planning section are not aware of any delay with e-planning publishing, but will check

### **Placemaking & Physical Development**

- The FASTER electrical charger unit planned for the Tennis Club in Dundalk is a double unit
- The Louth side of the Carlingford Greenway is progressing well, the Northern Ireland side is expected in June 2024
- Narrow Water Bridge project is progressing well

### **Organisational Development**

- The appointment of the Biodiversity Officer was welcomed, once settled the new appointee will present to the SPC and possibly the Council thereafter
- A new model twitter helpline piloted by Dublin City Council will be examined, however Members were advised of monitoring of direct messages by the Customer Service team, and a 24/7 response service provided by Louth County Council through our on-call service after hours.

### **Social Development**

- All allocations and transfer applications are processed under the Louth County Council Scheme of Letting Priorities
- 4 bed properties only make up 5% of our allocation requirement
- 10 units have recently been approved by the Department for our Affordable Housing Scheme
- Grants Schemes will be opening on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October with a new application form, process and checklist. Applicants will be required to have an Occupational Therapist and a Contractors report specifying works required and costs

- Schemes to promote library membership of young children to encourage reading from an early age are ongoing
- Estate Management Policy will be reviewed by the Housing SPC
- A contractor has been appointed to the VARCITIES project

Cllr Keelan expressed disappointment that no member of staff had reached out to him following comments he made during the Dundalk Municipal District Meeting and directed that the Meeting Administrator report on comments in the next Dundalk MD Minutes. Cllr Liam Reilly advised that he had left messages, Cllr Coffey advised her door was always open and Joe McGuinness, Director of Services advised what minutes were required to record. Other Members spoke in support of Mental Health Awareness.

#### **Minute No. 178/23**

**Notice of Motion: Cllr Conor Keelan**  
**Seconded by: Cllr Emma Coffey**

*"That this Council reaffirms its commitment to honour and commemorate the unheralded contribution of Cumann na mBan to the independence of this state. In doing so we pledge to name a piece of infrastructure after Cumann na mBan in County Louth as previously adopted in motions 907/15 and again in July 2016."*

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

*Whilst noting the previous motions, the Council have no plans to name any piece of infrastructure and are unclear on the naming convention that would be used.*

Speaking on the Motion, Cllr Keelan requested a response from Management that they intend to install infrastructure. The Chief Executive advised of no funding source for same and suggested the Councillors Allocations could be used. Cllr Keelan stated this was the third time the same motion was proposed and seconded.

#### **Minute No. 179/23**

**Notice of Motion: Cllr Conor Keelan**  
**Seconded by: Cllr Emma Coffey**

*"That this Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to examine changes to the electoral register to make it easier to secure a postal vote at the time of an election. And that this motion be sent to the Minister for comment and to all City and County Councils."*

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

*This is a matter for the Members.*

#### **Minute No. 180/23**

**Notice of Motion: Cllr John Sheridan**  
**Seconded by: Cllr Emma Coffey**

*"In line with policy objective HOU 12 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027, that Louth County Council will explore routes for the provision of 'rightsizing' options for persons over 55 in the*

county. Subject to funding, that Louth County Council engage with relevant stakeholders on providing accommodation opportunities for those aged over 55 who currently own their own homes, similar to the 'Private Rightsizing Scheme' launched by Limerick City and County Council this summer."

**Reply:**

*The Housing Strategic Policy Committee will examine this issue and how it could align with our current Allocations Scheme.*

Cllr Joanna Byrne advised that this had been looked at in the September meeting of the Housing SPC.

**Minute No. 181/23**

**Notices of Questions – Cllr Joanna Byrne and Cllr Emma Cutlip**

In accordance with Standing Order 12(vi) the response to a Notice of Question raised by Cllr Joanna Byrne was noted without debate.

In accordance with Standing Order 12(vi) the response to a Notice of Question raised by Cllr Emma Cutlip was noted without debate, and in accordance with Standing Order 12(vii)(a) deemed to be dealt with in her absence.

**Minute No. 182/23**

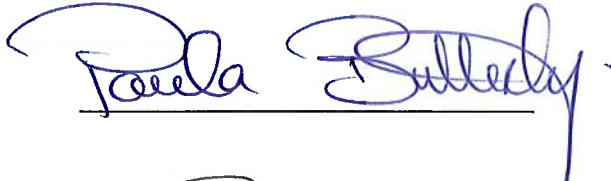
**Correspondence**

All (17) items of Correspondence listed on the Agenda were noted.

There being no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date: 20 Nov 2023

Cathaoirleach: 

Meeting Administrator: 