



Comhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

## **Louth County Council May Meeting**

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber of Co. Hall, Dundalk on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024, at 10:00a.m.

### **In Attendance:**

Presiding: Cathaoirleach: Councillor Paula Butterly

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

Apologies: Councillors: Pío Smith, Eileen Tully

Apologies: Executive: None

Officials: Joan Martin, Chief Executive  
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services  
Gráinne Tuomey, Meeting Administrator  
Bernie Woods, Director of Services  
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services  
Yvonne O'Brien, A/Director of Services  
David Jones, Director of Services  
Ger Murphy, Director of Services  
Joanna Kelly, Senior Planner  
John O'Hagan, Senior Engineer  
Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer  
Finbarr Gethins, Senior Executive Officer  
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer

### **Minute No. 93/24**

### **Minutes from Monthly Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Seán Kelly  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Antóin Watters  
**And Approved**

## **Minute No. 94/24**

### **Minutes of District Meetings for Noting**

The Minutes of the following District Meetings were noted by Members present:

- Borough District of Drogheda 4th March 2024
- Municipal District of Dundalk 2nd April 2024
- Municipal District of Ardee 4th April 2024
- Borough District of Drogheda 8th April 2024
- Municipal District of Dundalk Special Meeting 15th April 2024

## **Minute No. 95/24**

### **Minutes of Committee Meetings for Noting**

The Minutes of the following Committee Meetings were noted by Members present:

- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC Meeting 27th April 2023
- Planning and Support Infrastructure SPC Meeting 18th May 2023
- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC Meeting 19th September 2023
- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC Meeting 21st November 2023
- Planning and Support Infrastructure SPC Meeting 6th December 2023
- Audit Committee Meeting 7th December 2023
- Planning and Support Infrastructure SPC Meeting 13th December 2023
- Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC Meeting 23rd January 2024
- Audit Committee Meeting 15th February 2024
- Corporate Policy Group Meeting 3rd April 2024

## **Minute No. 96/24**

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

Cllr Seán Kelly who had sat in for an Cathaoirleach Cllr Paula Butterly in her absence, at the request of Members present, reported on the May CPG meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> of May.

## **Minute No. 97/24**

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

Reports were given on the following SPCs by the following Elected Members:

- Planning and Support Infrastructure by Cllr John Reilly

Council Members were updated on agenda items discussed and presentations given at the meeting.

Members were advised by Cllr Liam Reilly that the Climate Action and Energy SPC was unable to go ahead due to lack of quorum, but a meeting is scheduled for the coming week.

### **Minute No. 98/24**

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

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

**Proposed by:** Cllr Kevin Callan  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Emma Coffey  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 99/24**

#### **To Consider and Adopt the Annual Report 2023**

Following discussion, it was established that missing litter data in the Performance indicator appendices of the Annual Report is externally generated and outside the control of Louth County Council and forms part of the unaudited NOAC report which would be updated to the Annual Report when audited.

Approval of the Annual Report as set out before Members and to include photos where missing and the update of NOAC when audited was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Maeve Yore  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Kevin Callan  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 100/24**

#### **Provision of Assistance for the promotion of interests in local community groups or Projects as provided for under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001**

Approval of Amenity Grants as broken down for Members by Municipal District area was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Dolores Minogue  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Antóin Watters  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 101/24**

#### **Issuing of Polling Information Cards**

In accordance with Schedule 3 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and Article 55 of the Local Elections Regulations 1995 (as amended) approval for Louth County Council Returning Officer to issue Polling information cards to electors was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Marianne Butler  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Kevin Callan  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 102/24**

#### **Disposal of 93A Georges Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth to Leonard and Woods Development Limited**

In accordance with Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, disposal of 93A Georges Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth to Leonard and Woods Development Limited at market value and as set out before Members on the Agenda was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Liam Reilly  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Emma Coffey  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 103/24**

#### **Vacancy on Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) – Sectoral Representative**

Members noted the resignation of Mr John Carroll as Agricultural Pillar Representative on the LCDC, and the nomination from the Irish Farmers Association of Mr Kevin Sweeney as his replacement on the committee.

Approval of the nomination of Mr Sweeney was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Dolores Minogue  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Kevin Callan  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 104/24**

#### **Vacancy on the Housing Strategic Policy Committee – Sectoral Representative**

Members noted the resignation of Mr Pat McCormick as Business Pillar Representative on the SPC, and the nomination from the Dundalk Chamber of Commerce of Ms. Barbara Rajiska as his replacement on the committee.

Approval of the nomination of Ms. Rajiska was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Marianne Butler  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Kevin Callan  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 105/24**

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

A reminder was given to Members of outstanding reports, in accordance with Section 141 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, which requires Members to report at least annually on the activities and operations of Bodies, Boards and Committees to which they are elected, appointed or nominated to represent Louth County Council.

Cllr Meenan advised that he had attended meetings of the following bodies/boards/committees and suggested he might circulate the reports to members:

- North East Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force
- Regional Health Forum – Dublin North East

### **Minute No. 106/24**

#### **Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan 2021 – 2027**

Thomas McEvoy Director of Services and Joanna Kelly Senior Planner spoke on the Chief Executive report as set out before Members. Members were advised they were required to adopt a variation to the County Development Plan to align the Plan to Ministerial Guidelines which had issued and to which Members must have regards. Once adopted the changes would have immediate effect.

Approval of the Variation was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr Kevin Callan  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Liam Reilly  
**And resolved**

### **Minute No. 107/24**

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

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

The following items were highlighted under the relevant Directorates:

##### **Support Services**

- Letters are only sent out by Louth County Council on foot of notice of motion on agenda
- Louth County Council has no input, control or influence with Uisce Eireann
- A new call management system is being sought to replace the existing SUGAR system

##### **Strategic Economic Development**

- Landowners may make submissions on zoning on RZLT lands, following which closing period for submissions the RZLT will revert to Members for approval
- Levies are applicable to when approval of the Temporary Development Contribution Waiver Scheme took effect
- Cllr Yore described the annual St Patrick's day trip to NYC as a waste of money with many Members speaking in support of the promotion of Louth via the St. Patrick's and the benefit of face-to-face contact with groups
- Dundalk Port is still in the ownership of Dublin Port. Transfer to Louth County Council requires the signature of 3 Ministers

## **Placemaking & Physical Development**

- St Dominic's Park missing playground equipment will be replaced, with overall new playground design expected for 2025
- High court ruling on Ardee Bypass is welcomed with caution that an appeal period follows
- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund Call 3 funding application covers the compulsory purchase order of circa 10 properties, no further information can be given
- The Road Works Programme is out to tender
- Clearance works to facilitate the Narrow Water Bridge project were subject to reports and Environmental Impact Assessments in advance. No item of cultural or biodiversity significance was identified in the reports. Replanting will be carried out as part of the project
- An announcement of Government funding of an additional €9.6m for road works in Louth was described as misleading by Members as it is already earmarked for the LIS scheme
- There are 28 applicants vying for a share of €564k potential funding for CIS works. Priority applications will be assessed and submitted to the Department by Friday
- A 'Leave no trace' National policy was the response for a request for additional bin provision
- Concerns were raised about speeding and pedestrian safety at various locations including the Armagh Road
- New National Speed Limit guidelines when distributed will reduce National Roads from 100 to 80 kph, Local Roads from 80 to 60 kph, and town centre areas from 50 to 30 kph
- The roads budget includes provision for line marking
- No construction or additional structures can be erected on protected buildings

## **Organisational Development**

- Cross Directorate efforts on litter blackspots such as Williamson's Place appear to be gaining traction with landlords willing to engage and assist efforts
- A contentious discussion took place on funding for Dundalk Athletics Track where Cllr Yore demanded action, and Cllr Keelan supporting Cllr Yore spoke over the Chief Executive, with Cllr Yore insisting that the Department had advised funding had been approved, whereby the Executive confirmed they have not received written approval of funding to surface the track
- Louth County Council has Service Level Agreements with An Tain and Aura leisure facilities whereby the management and operation of the facilities are the responsibility of An Tain and Aura
- The Data of any CCTV owned, operated and/or installed for Louth County Council remains under the control of Louth County Council
- Louth County Council is working with an Garda Síochána to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour at lands at the back of Fatima

## **Social Development**

- Units at Racecourse Meadows are subject to an owner operated long term leasing agreement
- Duiche Roden works are a matter between the private developer and Affordable Housing Body
- The Housing team are working to address Anti-Social Behaviour issues at Riverside Crescent and where they otherwise occur
- A difficulty was acknowledged in obtaining ground floor accommodation
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**Minute no. 108/24**

**Council Members who are not standing for 2024 Local Elections**

An Cathaoirleach Cllr Butterly acknowledged and thanked the four members who have decided not to put their names forward for election in June, and a presentation of an embossed crystal glass plaque by the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive followed:

Cllr Liam Reilly (FF) who had been a Councillor since 2008, Cllr Edel Corrigan (SF) who had been a Councillor since 2009, Cllr Sharkey who had been a Councillor since 2003, and Cllr Eileen Tully who had been a Councillor since 2019 following the death of her husband Oliver who had been elected in the current term.

The Cathaoirleach and Elected Members spoke fondly of working with the four Councillors and wished them well in the future. This sentiment was echoed by the Chief Executive who remarked that the Council was losing some very capable Councillors who can look back and be proud of what the council has achieved and highlighted some of the successful projects over the current council term since 2019.

Cllr Edel Corrigan remarked that when she started as a Councillor the chamber was a very different place as she was one of only two females sitting, and she would like to see even more diversity and inclusion in the future. She said it had been a great experience and thanked her 'fantastic running mates and colleagues' wishing them well the upcoming elections.

Cllr Tomás Sharkey spoke of the changes over his 21 years' service with the advent of email, laptops and social media since he commenced, and thanked his fellow Councillors, public servants and the media for their hard work over the years. He apologized to any staff whom he may have upset or offended as a Councillor and wished his colleagues all the best in the elections.

Cllr Liam Reilly thanked all those who had elected him over his 16-year term, stating it had been his honour to serve, thanking his party Fianna Fáil and all parties for their help over the years, and his family and friends for their ongoing support. He wished the Chief Executive well in her upcoming retirement and thanked the staff of Louth County Council for organizing and attending the meetings of council.

**Minute no. 109/24**

**Notice of Motion Cllr Dolores Minogue**

Seconded by Cllr John Reilly

*In light of upcoming Departmental funding streams for swimming pools, I urge the council to explore the possibility of initiating a feasibility study for the establishment of a public swimming pool in Ardee, inspired by the highly successful temporary pool initiative*

**Reply: J. McGuinness, Director of Services, Organisational Development**

*In the first instance, we will get a report back from Swim Ireland on the usage of the "Pop-up Pool" in Ardee and then review same*

Members noted the response to the Notice of Motion, Cllr Minogue welcoming the response suggested that perhaps the usage of the four schools in Ardee travelling to pools weekly could be included in any review.

**Minute no. 110/24**

**Notice of Motion**    **Cllr Edel Corrigan**  
Seconded by        Cllr Kevin Callan

*"That Louth County Council waive all costs associated with providing graves and burial for children under the age of eighteen in local authority graveyards, and, that this council write to all local authorities in Ireland, as well as all relevant organisations within the Louth County boundaries to encourage them to waive the fees associated with child burials."*

**Reply: D. Jones, Director of Services, Placemaking & Physical Development**

*There are two active public graveyards in the County that are owned and managed directly by Louth County Council (St Patrick's Cemetery at Dowdallshill, Dundalk, and Newtown Cemetery, Drogheda).*

*Louth County Council has the power to set charges at these two locations only. In the context of Newtown Cemetery, grave digging services are employed directly by the undertakers arranging a burial, and therefore charges relating to same are not set by Louth County Council.*

*Charges at other graveyards in the county are a matter for the parishes that operate them, and Louth county council has no influence over these charges.*

*While acknowledging the sentiment behind the Notice of Motion, charges applied by Louth County Council for grave plots/grave digging services are applied universally to all customers. The introduction of a waiver scheme, as proposed, for one cohort of customer would not be considered equitable, particularly given that many plots initially acquired are typically used as family plots over time, as well as the application of grave digging charges directly by undertakers as outlined above in relation to Newtown Cemetery, compared to St Patricks' Cemetery, where the grave digging charge is set and applied by Louth County Council.*

*Accordingly, Louth County Council does not plan to introduce a waiver of costs, as proposed.*

Members noted the response of the Executive. Cllr Corrigan speaking on the motion accepted costs of Funeral Directors and others may be outside the remit of Louth County Council but that the waiving of fees under the remit of Louth County Council would not have a massive impact on the Council but would relieve a burden on grieving families.

Cllr Corrigan suggested we should waive any costs under our control in the two graveyards and write to all other Local Authorities and any other organisation within Louth to encourage same.

Other Members spoke in support of the motion.

**Minute no.111/24**

**Notice of Motion**        **Cllr Conor Keelan**  
**Seconded by**            Cllr Maeve Yore

*"That LCC initiates an external quality assurance review as a matter of urgency. This Council is concerned that there has been no external quality assurance review undertaken by LCC in at least the last 5 year. This is despite there being a recommendation of the Institute of Internal Auditors that an external review takes place at least every 5 years. This recommendation was also included in the 2018 NOAC Report".*

**Reply: J. McGuinness, Director of Services, Organisational Development**

*Louth County Council source our Internal Audit Service providers through the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) who have established a framework in this regard. Part of the qualification for same includes a quality criteria requirement and Louth County Council are satisfied with same.*

Members noted the response of the Executive. The Chief Executive, responding to Members comments advised that the NOAC recommendation referred to local authorities where the internal auditor was a member of the council staff. Louth County Council procures a professional Internal Auditor service through the OGP framework and as such quality assurance is one of the criteria used to assess the tender. Cllr Sharkey suggested that it would do no harm to write to the OGP and DPER to ask them to see that the recommendation is referred to in the OGP process.

#### **Minute no. 112/24**

**Notice of Motion  
Seconded by**

**Cllr Conor Keelan  
Cllr Edel Corrigan**

*"That the Recorded Monuments LH007-016001- : Ringfort - rath : LISDOO and LH007-016002- : Souterrain : LISDOO, both of which are subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places, established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994, be added to the list of **protected structures of LCC given their historical significance to the local communities of Lisdoon and Dowdallshill in terms of generation of place-names and the potential for tourism development and that the local authority consider making an application with the owner of the site to the Community Monuments Fund.**"*

**Reply: T. McEvoy, Director of Services, Strategic Economic Development**

*National monuments are afforded protection under the National Monuments Act. The features referred to in the Motion are listed as recorded monuments and enjoy full protection under this legislation. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to seek protection for these features under planning legislation.*

*The Community Monuments Fund invests in archaeological heritage and helps owners and custodians of archaeological monuments to safeguard them into the future for the benefit of communities and the public. It is therefore open to the owners of such sites to make an application under this funding stream.*

*The heritage section of the local authority is happy to engage with any owner of such sites and will facilitate them to make an application under this funding stream.*

Members noted the response of the Executive. Cllr Keelan spoke on the motion and reaffirmed his position that the items be added to the Protected Structures list.

#### **Minute no. 113/24**

**Notice of Motion  
Seconded by**

**Cllr Maeve Yore  
Cllr Bernie Conlon**

*That LCC agree, adopt and include in LCC Standing Orders at the beginning of the full term of the new Council the d'Hondt System to ensure fairness, transparency and equality for all elected reps to ensure each has the opportunity to be Cathaoirleach/Leas Cathaoirleach, Mayor/Vice Mayor of their Municipal District/Borough Districts and on Committees and outside bodies*

**Reply: J. McGuinness, Director of Services, Organisational Development**

*This is a Matter for the Members, however the Members should note that the election of Cathaoirlioh and Leas Cathaoirlioh is governed by Part 5 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and can only be changed by primary legislation.*

Members noted the response of the Executive. Cllr Yore spoke of being excluded and ostracised. Cllr Meenan suggested it was up to the party leaders following the local elections to encourage the D'Hondt System and it could be implemented very easily.

Cllr Butler suggested information be given on this and the grouping system, and responding to comments made by Cllr Yore suggested that members who were co-opted are no less of Members than others and once elected every member is equal.

Cllrs Sharkey, McGeough supported the motion, with Cllr Keelan suggesting that Dundalk Members could work together but whether they could "work together in here remains to be seen".

Cllr Sheridan suggested that for future meetings of new council perhaps members might come prepared with documents ready.

**Minute no. 114/24**

**Notice of Motion  
Seconded by**

**Cllr Marianne Butler  
Cllr Antóin Watters**

*That Louth Council in deciding where traffic counts will take place, no longer limits these counts to "roads where accident clusters have been identified". Rather that this Council considers other factors such as road design, information from our own Fire Service, An Garda Síochána and other relevant agencies and that local knowledge from both residents and elected representatives is considered also.*

*Background: As local authorities have not received accident data from the RSA since 2020 and that the 2018 data is no longer available on the RSA website. Louth County Council should use any and all quantitative and qualitative data that is has in deciding what roads/streets need to be evaluated for possible road safety measures. Traffic counts should also take place on roads with no history of accidents but have problems with their design and/or issues with excessive speeding.*

**Reply: D. Jones, Director of Services, Placemaking and Physical Development**

*The selection of locations for the completion of speed counts have been prioritised based on collision data/history of accident clusters, which assists in informing future Low-Cost Safety Schemes, funded through the Department of Transport.*

*The overall objective of Low-Cost Safety works is to achieve a minimum 30%-40% reduction in collisions, though some locations showing demonstrable hazards may also be considered by the Department for funding under this scheme. In addition, the Department may also identify sections of the network with the most prevalent safety issues based on their own analysis (Locations of Interest), that Local Authorities are required to prioritise for application for funding under this grant category for the following year.*

*Work is ongoing at national level to resolve the current issues associated with the sharing of collision data with Local Authorities. Should the matter remain unresolved in the short term, other means will be considered to inform decisions regarding the prioritisation of speed traffic counts and targeted road safety interventions.*

Members noted the response of the Executive. Cllr Butler stated that she was a firm believer in

speed and traffic counts and pleaded for more and repeated traffic counts.

Cllr Sheridan, saying he had raised a similar motion at MD level had been given stats to show that traffic calming was not required on a stretch of road and there was zero point in reducing speed limits where unnecessary.

Cllr Meenan suggested that there was a lack of uniformity of ramp installation in new estates and suggested that all new housing estates should be conditioned to have ramps as standard.

Cllrs Keenan and Minogue also spoke in support of the motion.

### **Minute no. 115/24**

#### **Notices of Question**

Notices of Questions raised by each of Cllrs Michelle Hall and Pio Smith, and the Responses of the Executive were noted by Members.

### **Minute no. 116/24**

#### **Suspension of Standing Orders to extend time to complete the meeting**

During the CE report agenda item, a roll call vote to suspend Standing Order no. 3 to extend the time of meeting conclusion from 13.30hrs to 14.00hrs was called 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			
	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>

And the motion was passed.

**Minute no. 117/24**

**Condolences**

Condolences were offered to the family and friends of:

Patricia Muckian, Dundalk

**Minute no. 118/24**

**Congratulations**

Congratulations were offered to the Cathaoirleach on a successful term as chair of the council over the last year

**Minute no. 119/24**

**Correspondence – Noted by Members**


Correspondence from the following body was noted by Members

- Tipperary County Council 11th April 2024

As there was no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Cathaoirleach: 

Meeting Administrator: 