



Comhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

## **Louth County Council Special Meeting**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber of Co. Hall, Dundalk on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024, at 7.15p.m.

### **In Attendance:**

Presiding: Councillor, Kevin Callan – Cathaoirleach

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, Paula Butterly, James Byrne (online), Joanna Byrne (online), Bernie Conlon, Eric Donovan (online), Ciarán Fisher, Anne-Marie Ford, Michelle Hall (online), Seán Kelly, Sionainn McCann, Pearse McGeough, Shane McGuinness, Andrea McKevitt, Paddy McQuillan (online), Kevin Meenan, Fiona MhicConchoille, Dolores Minogue (online), Robert Nash, Declan Power, John Reilly, John Sheridan, Pio Smith (online), Antóin Watters, Maeve Yore

Apologies: Emma Coffey, Ejiro O'Hare Stratton, Jim Tenanty

Officials: Joe McGuinness, Temporary Chief Executive  
Ger Murphy, Director of Services  
David Jones, Director of Services  
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services  
Bernie Woods, Director of Finance  
David Hanratty, A/Director of Services  
Yvonne O'Brien, A/Director of Services  
Bryan Coughlan, Meeting Administrator  
Brian Lynch, Financial Accountant  
Helen Divilly, Head of IT  
Susan Deery, Administrative Officer

### **Minute No. 201A/24**

Joe McGuinness, Temporary Chief Executive referred the members to the report circulated and to consider it in tandem with the September meeting report.

A number of items were highlighted by Joe McGuinness:

- Acknowledgement of the Whips meeting twice since the September meeting to discuss this matter.
- The Local Property Tax (LPT) base rate is not to be considered in isolation as it should be linked with the full budget considerations and the expenditure pressures that are emerging when presenting an annual balanced budget.

- There are 51,527 houses in Louth with 72% of them in the lowest two brackets for LPT.
- The ongoing demand regarding housing services.
- Energy increases and a 24% increase in energy rates for 2025.
- An increase of 2% on wages/salaries for staff
- Significant increases in Retained Firefighter costs resulting from the national Workplace Relations Commission agreement.

Joe McGuinness, Temporary Chief Executive, concluded his introduction by recommending an increase in the LPT base rate by 15%, held for 5 years, but noted it was a matter for the Members to consider and approve.

Councillor Maeve Yore stated her belief that Central Government should be funding local authorities and therefore **proposed** a 0% increase to the LPT for 2025. This was **seconded** by Councillor Kevin Callan.

Councillor Pio Smith **proposed** an amendment which would increase the LPT base rate by 15%, and holding it at that for 5 years. This was **seconded** by Councillor Marianne Butler.

The amended proposal was supported by a number of the members present, including Councillors Butler, Hall and Sheridan.

In response to comments regarding any potential increase in the commercial rate, Joe McGuinness, advised the members that a consequence of not increasing the base rate of the LPT could be a Commercial Rates increase.

Councillor James Byrne acknowledged the work which was put into compiling the LPT Report and added he would continue to vote against an increase. Similar comments were made by Councillor Butterly who also added that Commercial Rates should not be increased while Councillor Anne-Marie Ford queried if there were any other areas within the budget from which efficiencies could be made.

A roll call vote took place on Councillor Pio Smiths proposal to increase the LPT Rate by 15% with the outcome 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		
Eric Donovan		1		
Ciaran Fisher		1		
Anne-Marie Ford		1		
Michelle Hall	1			
Sean Kelly		1		
Sionnan McCann		1		
Pearse McGeough		1		
Shane McGuinness		1		
Andrea McKevitt		1		
Paddy McQuillan		1		
Fiona MhicConchoille		1		
Kevin Meenan		1		
Dolores Minogue		1		
Robert Nash		1		

Ejio O'Hare Stratton				1
Declan Power		1		
John Reilly		1		
John Sheridan	1			
Pio Smith	1			
Jim Tenanty				1
Antoin Watters		1		
Maeve Yore		1		
	4	22	0	3

The amendment fell and therefore the substantive motion, that there would be no change in the LPT base rate for 2025, was adopted.

There being no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date: 18/11/24

Cathaoirleach: 

Meeting Administrator: 