



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

Cruinniú Míosúil Chomhairle Contae Lú Louth County Council Monthly Meeting

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber of Co. Hall, Dundalk on Monday, 21st July 2025, at 10:00a.m.

In Attendance:

Presiding: Councillor, Seán Kelly – Cathaoirleach

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, James Byrne (online), Kevin Callan, Bernie Conlon, Eric Donovan, Ciarán Fisher, Michelle Hall, Rachel Kerley, Debbie McCole, Pearse McGeough, Shane McGuinness, Andrea McKevitt, Paddy McQuillan (online), Fiona MhicConchoille, Kevin Meenan, Dolores Minogue, Robert Nash, Ejiro O'Hare Stratton, Declan Power, John Reilly, John Sheridan, Pío Smith, Jim Tenanty, Maeve Yore.

Apologies: Councillor Anne Marie Ford

Officials: David Conway, Chief Executive
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services
Joanna Kelly, Acting Director of Services
Bernadette Woods, Director of Finance
Olivia McCormack, Acting Director of Services
Declan Grimes, Acting Director of Services
David Hanratty, Acting Director of Services
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer
Sinéad Dooley, Meetings Administrator
James Bronte, GIS Co-Ordinator
Finbar Gethins, Senior Executive Officer
Gavin McLaughin, Communications Officer
John O'Hagain, Senior Engineer
Amanda Brannigan, County Librarian
Susan Deery, Administrative Officer
Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer
Turlough King, Acting Senior Planner
Nikki Campbell, Head of LEO
Bryan Coughlan, Senior Executive Officer
Alan McCarthy, Communications Graduate

Minute No. 163/25

Minutes of Annual Meeting and Monthly Meeting held on 16th June 2025

The Minutes were:-

Proposed by: Cllr Kevin Callan
Seconded by: Cllr John Sheridan
And Approved.

Minute No. 164/25

Minutes of District Meetings – for noting

- Municipal District of Ardee 5th June 2025 Annual and Monthly Meeting
- Borough District of Drogheda 9th June 2025 Annual and Monthly Meeting
- Municipal District of Dundalk 10th June 2025 Annual and Monthly Meeting

Minute No. 165/25

Minutes of Committee Meetings – for noting

- Minutes from Corporate Policy Group meeting of 4th June 2025 to be formally approved at next meeting of CPG.

Minute No. 166/25

Report from Chairperson of Corporate Policy Group

A report was delivered by An Cathaoirleach Seán Kelly on proceedings from the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 9th July 2025.

Minute No. 167/25

Strategic Policy Committee Chairpersons Report

Cllr Kevin Meenan, Chair of the Social Development SPC provided an update from the June meeting.

Cllr Rachel Kerley, Chair of the Planning SPC provided an update from the July meeting.

Cllr Robert Nash, Chair of the Community & Placemaking SPC provided an update from the July meeting.

Minute No. 168/25

Approval of Attendance at Conferences

None for approval.

Minute No. 169/25

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

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

Proposed by: Cllr Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr Bernie Conlon
And resolved.

Minute No. 170/25

To agree a variation to the basic rate of Local Property Tax 2026 – Local Adjustment Factor

Director of Services, Bernie Woods, advised members that the decision for the 2026 Local Property Tax local adjustment factor, which is a reserved function, must be made on or before 31st August 2025.

Following discussion, it was **Proposed** by Cllr Pio Smith to defer the decision to a Special Meeting on 26th August 2025, which was **Seconded** by Cllr Robert Nash.

It was also agreed that the Budget Workshop would take place on 26th August also.

Minute No. 171/25

Section 141 Reports 2024 – Compliance with Section 141 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended

In accordance with Section 11 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), reports were given by the following Councillors:

- Cllr Michelle Hall reported on the meeting of Droichead Arts Centre which took place on 26th June 2025.
- Cllr Andrea McKeivitt advised that she is currently in the process of being appointed to the Creative Spark Board and will provide an update following her first meeting in the coming weeks.

Minute No. 172/25

Section 183 – Proposed Disposal of Fee Simple interest in the property at Duleek Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92 XNH1

The proposed disposal of Fee Simple Interest in the property at Duleek Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92 XNH1 was:

Proposed by: Cllr Pio Smith
Seconded by: Cllr Michelle Hall
And resolved.

Minute No. 173/25

Community Safety Partnership Update

Acting Director of Services, Joanna Kelly, presented to the members advising that: Safety Partnership Regulations 2025 came into effect 30th June 2025 and provide for the establishment and resourcing of safety partnerships

- Joint Policing Committees stand dissolved
- Draft guidelines were issued for consultation however final version not yet published
- The Department has highlighted that improved community safety needs a multi-sectoral approach, strong inter-agency collaboration and proactive dialogue with the community.
- Elected members must be nominated by the local authority
- Chief Executive nominate relevant staff
- The Minister then appoints people to the Partnership.
- The term of any appointment is three years
- Minimum number of meetings per year is 6
- Provision that the public can attend one meeting per annum
- Oireachtas Members can also attend one – but not the same one as the public
- Partnership is not a committee of Council and does not report to Council
- Ministerial appointments expected September
- Intended that first Partnership meeting would be held end of Sept/early October

Cllr. Seán Kelly noted that discussions have taken place regarding each District appointing two members, in addition to the Cathaoirleach. However, this proposal is still subject to further discussion and agreement among the members.

Minute No. 174/25

Breithniú ar Thuarascálacha ar Chomhréitigh ón bPríomhfheidhmeannach / Consideration of Reports and Recommendations from Chief Executives Monthly Management Report

Finance and System Support

The following was highlighted in relation to Financed and System Support:

- Members were informed that the rollout of the new CRM system may enhance how the public accesses information and that the 2025 Work Plan included consideration and implementation of a replacement website.
- Members were advised that Uisce Éireann has given a commitment to the removal of the council logo from its fleet over a phasing out period of 6 months. A/Director of Services, Joanna Kelly undertook to liaise with Uisce Éireann to determine if the timeframe could be shortened.
- Members were reminded of the Portal which is available to them to raise issues directly with Uisce Éireann.

Economic Delivery

- Concerns regarding housing connections to Uisce Éireann were discussed. It was confirmed that the council has engaged with Uisce Éireann on the matter and received assurance that all necessary approvals are now in the system.
- The Tourism Strategy is currently in its draft stage and should be presented to the members at the September meeting.

- The Tain Trail Draft Service Level Agreements & Terms of Office have issued to other five Counties and a meeting with all six Counties on this will take place next week.
- Confirmation was received that a total of 1400 Protected Structures are currently registered with a total of 23 applications received this year as a result of the public consultation.
- It was confirmed that the council sponsored the Leinster Fleadh to a sum of €5,000.
- Members were provided with clarification on the process for collecting the dereliction tax, including that the council is permitted to apply the tax retrospectively from 1st January of the relevant year.
- Confirmation was received that the works could be facilitated as required at a trail which is damaged at Urni Graveyard, however, any works which may be undertaken will require the permission of the landowner.
- The Executive are actively notifying businesses who are not adhering to the Shop Front Guidelines.

Operations and Environment Delivery

The following was noted in relation to Operations and Environment Delivery:

- Acting Director of Services, David Hanratty, briefed members on the Orange Rain Warning which was announced on 20th July. It was confirmed that a communication update would issue to Members later in the afternoon.
- The pilot Bag & Bin Campaign will be examined to establish if it can be extended to beaches next year.
- Members expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the staff and other stakeholders in preparing for the Dowdallshill Graveyard Blessings.
- Agreement was reached that a discussion with the members on the moratorium on public lighting would be accommodated.
- In response to concerns raised in respect to lorries using side roads to access the Armagh Road in Dundalk, it was agreed that Engineers would examine the feasibility of introducing weight restrictions.
- Members praised the Dog Wardens for their prompt action and communication with two recent reports of dangerous dogs.
- Members requested an update on the oil spill response at Clogherhead Harbour and storage of materials and waste at the site was also highlighted.
- It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged between the Clogherhead Harbour Master and the relevant section of the local authority, to address concerns relating to overcrowding, harbour dues, and outstanding fines.
- Flooding at the Baltray Road, Termonfeckin was discussed and a commitment provided that the issue would be referred for investigation.
- Contractors are currently examining several solar-powered bins in Dundalk that are not functioning properly.
- Maintenance of the Navvy Bank, Dundalk and malfunctioning bollards at Earl Street, Dundalk was highlighted by members with confirmation provided that both would be examined.
- A request to re-examine the Bye-Laws to permit cycling on the Navvy Bank on a Sunday by Louth Disability Cycling Group was requested.

HR, Corporate and Community Delivery

The following was highlighted in relation to HR, Corporate and Community Delivery:

- Confirmation was received that the transfer of lands at Bullys Acre to the council is currently with the HSE for their follow up.

- Acting Director of Services, Joanna Kelly, committed to reverting on queries raised in respect to the position of Disability Officer.
- A report on the Creative Agism Project in Drogheda was requested once the project is completed.

Housing and Culture Delivery

The following was highlighted in relation to Housing and Culture Delivery:

- Discussion around rent arrears took place with members assured that the Housing Section is actively engaging with tenants and agreeing to payment plans. A report on trends was requested by the members and a suggestion made for relevant staff to engage with other local authorities to establish what processes are being applied elsewhere to address the matter of rent arrears.
- Confirmation was received that two Social Workers are employed by the local authority and who assist those who are subject to Domestic Violence and it was confirmed that a specific housing allocation category is in place for anyone who may find themselves in this situation.
- A request for a second Age Friendly Officer was received which was noted and commitment provided to assess same through the Age Friendly Strategy.

Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Delivery

The following was highlighted in relation to Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Delivery:

- Engagement continues with property owners via the RDF (Rural Regeneration and Development Fund) Scheme and properties are being identified throughout the county.
- A preferred panel to rollout the Pathfinder Project has been established with the expectation to commence on site by October.
- Confirmation was received that tenders are currently being assessed for the Safe Routes to Schools and work will be completed by September.
- Members were advised that progress is being made on Ardee Castle, however, there is no update on the funding requested.
- Plans are being examined in relation to St Dominic's Park and pre-statutory consultation in relation to Glen Playground is being prepared with a view to progressing the Part 8 Application.
- Members requested an update for the next meeting on Active Travel measures in Drogheda following a resubmission of plans to the NTA.
- A suggestion was received that consideration be given to a dedicated space for the Merryweather Fire-engine to be established in St Nicolas Quarter or the Long Walk plans.

Minute No. 175/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Fiona Mhic Conchoille

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Meenan

That Louth County Council is concerned that the Central Bank of Ireland is facilitating the selling of Israeli War Bonds which are funding the genocide in Gaza.

Louth County Council notes that In January 2024 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) confirmed the plausibility of the charge of genocide against Israel and in June of that year, the UN's International Commission of Inquiry on Palestine found that Israel's actions in Gaza 'constitute the war crimes of wilful killing and mistreatment, and the crime against humanity of extermination.'

The following month, in July, an ICJ ruling declared that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid and its entire regime of military occupation of Palestinian territories is illegal and must end immediately.

All institutions are under a moral and legal obligation under the Genocide Convention, International human rights and CFT legislation, under Irish Human Rights Law and Ireland as a neutral country must not act in any way to facilitate these bonds. This Council therefore calls on the Central Bank of Ireland to immediately end the regulation of the Israeli Bond Issuance Programme

Reply: Joanna Kelly, A/Director of Services, Human Resources, Corporate & Community Delivery

This is a matter for the Members

Minute No. 176/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. John Reilly

Seconded: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt

"That Louth County Council provide any assistance at its disposal to support the sourcing of funding for a navigation vessel for the Carlingford Lough Commission, to facilitate the safe navigation of both commercial shipping and recreational sailing on Carlingford Lough."

Reply from Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services, Economic Delivery

Carlingford Lough Commissioners (CLC) is the Statutory Harbour Authority, the Local Lighthouse Authority and the Competent Harbour Authority responsible for the provision of pilotage services for its area of jurisdiction. Warrenpoint Harbour Authority (WHA) is their corresponding Northern Ireland Authority on Carlingford Lough. Both CLC and WHA, in exercise of their legislative powers, act as a joint Navigation Authority for Carlingford Lough and have appointed a joint Harbour Master. The Council can assist CLC by directing it to potential funding sources and will liaise with CLC on this basis.

Minute No. 177/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Kevin Callan

Seconded: Cllr. Declan Power

"On behalf of concerned residents of County Louth, the elected members of Louth County Council should write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to urgently request the publication of updated Wind Energy Development Guidelines, in light of the fact that the current guidelines, dating from 2006, remain in effect despite being widely acknowledged as outdated and no longer fit for purpose and noting the prolonged delay since the draft guidelines were issued in 2019. Furthermore, in recognition of the uncertainty caused by the absence of an up-to-date national policy/regulation, this Council calls on the Minister to introduce a temporary pause on all large-scale onshore wind farm developments, pending the finalisation and adoption of revised Wind Energy guidelines/regulation. This motion reflects this Councils commitment to ensuring that renewable energy development proceeds in a manner that is appropriately planned, environmentally sustainable, respects peoples rights and protects health and wellbeing of local communities and recognises the need for robust regulation is urgently required "

Reply from Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services, Economic Delivery Directorate

This is a matter for the members

Following discussion with the members it was proposed by Cllr Marianne Butler and seconded by Cllr John Sheridan that the second paragraph of the Motion be removed.

A roll call was then taken to approve the amendment to the Notice of Motion:

Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Marianne Butler	1			
James Byrne				1
Kevin Callan		1		
Emma Coffey				1
Bernie Conlon				1
Eric Donovan				1
Ciarán Fisher		1		
Anne-Marie Ford				1
Michelle Hall				1
Seán Kelly		1		
Rachel Kerley		1		
Sionainn McCann				1
Debbie McCole		1		
Pearse McGeough	1			
Shane McGuinness		1		
Andrea McKeivitt		1		
Paddy McQuillan				1
Fiona MhicConchoille	1			
Kevin Meenan	1			
Dolores Minogue		1		
Rober Nash		1		
Ejiro O'Hare Stratton				1
Declan Power		1		
John Reilly		1		
John Sheridan	1			
Pio Smith		1		
Jim Tenanty				1
Antóin Watters				1
Maeve Yore		1		
Total Votes	5	13	0	11

A roll call was then taken to adopt Cllr Callans Notice of Motion as currently worded:

Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Marianne Butler			1	
James Byrne				1
Kevin Callan	1			
Emma Coffey				1
Bernie Conlon				1
Eric Donovan				1
Ciarán Fisher	1			
Anne-Marie Ford				1
Michelle Hall				1
Seán Kelly	1			
Rachel Kerley	1			
Sionainn McCann				1
Debbie McCole	1			
Pearse McGeough	1			
Shane McGuinness	1			

Andrea McKeivitt	1			
Paddy McQuillan				1
Fiona MhicConchoille	1			
Kevin Meenan	1			
Dolores Minogue	1			
Rober Nash	1			
Ejiro O'Hare Stratton				1
Declan Power	1			
John Reilly	1			
John Sheridan			1	
Pio Smith	1			
Jim Tenanty				1
Antóin Watters				1
Maeve Yore	1			
Total Votes	16	0	2	11

Minute No. 178/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Shane McGuinness

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Callan

That Louth County Council consider this motion in respect of the dire situation we have in Dundalk Bay with our sea and water quality.

That we no longer consider any high-density housing model of any kind in the Dundalk South Area of Haggardstown, Dromiskin, Knockbridge, Blackrock or Castle Bellingham for the foreseeable future. The county Council should be satisfied first that our 2 no WWTP (Waste Water Treatment Plants) can facilitate any further large scale housing before any lands are zoned High density in any form.

Reply from Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services, Economic Delivery

The County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied) is the statutory plan for all development in County Louth. The Core Strategy of the Plan sets out the Growth Strategy for the County including population projections and associated housing requirements and is in line with national and regional policy.

Following discussion by the members, it was agreed that the Notice of Motion would not be adopted but would rather be discussed at the County Development Plan meetings.

Minute No. 179/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Debbie McCole

Seconded: Cllr. Fiona Mhic Conchoille

Noting the recent deaths from drowning and calls from the Water Safety Ireland for heightened vigilance around water, especially coastal waters, that this Council set up a data base by geographical area to list volunteer water search and rescue groups detailing their skill sets and specialties (including diving skills) that complement the Coast Guard and other Marine rescue services.

Further that a protocol be implemented that mandates that the appropriate volunteer group in the geographical area be called in the event of an emergency where their skill sets would be required. That this motion be passed to other Councils.

Reply from David Hanratty, Director of Operations and Environment Delivery

Louth County Council, through our Major Emergency Planning function, have a database of Voluntary Response Agencies and has a good working relationship with these organisations. As part of a review and update of the Louth County Council Major Emergency Plan in 2025, the inclusion of geographic information for these bodies will be investigated. The decision to call upon these Voluntary Groups is an operational function, and this is best left with the Principal Emergency Services on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the specific nature of each individual incident. In addition, while we will always coordinate, collaborate and train with colleagues in other emergency response organisations, both statutory and voluntary, a protocol cannot be developed by Louth County Council which mandates a third-party organisation to take particular actions.

Minute No. 180/25

Emergency Notice of Motion

It was noted that Cllr Eric Donovan had left the meeting, however, in accordance with Standing Order Reference No. 23, Cllr Pearse McGeough was authorised to propose the motion on Cllr Donovan’s behalf.

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Pearse McGeough

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Meenan

Following the disappointing VISA administration debacle faced by GAA Palestine over the past few weeks and the resulting heartbreak of the children and sponsors involved in the project to bring kids from Palestine to play GAA in Ireland, I am calling on this Council to write to the Minister of Justice, Jim O’Callaghan to ensure that there is no similar administrative delay by the Department of Justice when Ireland welcomes the young Palestinian Boxing team from the Aida Refugee Camp near Bethlehem later this month.

A roll call was then taken to approve the Emergency Notice of Motion:

Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Marianne Butler	1			
James Byrne				1
Kevin Callan	1			
Emma Coffey				1
Bernie Conlon				1
Eric Donovan				1
Ciarán Fisher	1			
Anne-Marie Ford				1
Michelle Hall				1
Seán Kelly	1			
Rachel Kerley	1			
Sionainn McCann				1
Debbie McCole	1			
Pearse McGeough	1			
Shane McGuinness	1			
Andrea McKevitt	1			

Paddy McQuillan				1
Fiona MhicConchoille	1			
Kevin Meenan	1			
Dolores Minogue	1			
Rober Nash	1			
Ejiro O'Hare Stratton				1
Declan Power	1			
John Reilly	1			
John Sheridan	1			
Pio Smith	1			
Jim Tenanty				1
Antóin Watters				1
Maeve Yore	1			
Total Votes	18	0	0	11

Minute No. 181/25

Correspondence

Members noted the following correspondence:

- Galway County Council 12th June 2025
- Donegal County Council 13th June 2025
- Waterford City & County Council 1st July 2025

Minute No. 182/25

Condolences

Condolences were offered to the family and friends of:

- Rose Loughran, Ravensdale, County Louth

Minute No. 183/25

Congratulations

Congratulations were extended to the Management and Staff of the Midwifery Led Unit in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital who celebrate their 25th Anniversary.

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

Date: 15th SEPT '25

Cathaoirleach: 

Meeting Administrator: Sinead Dooley