



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

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, 24th March 2025, at 10:00a.m.

In Attendance:

Presiding: Councillor, Kevin Callan – Cathaoirleach

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, James Byrne, Bernie Conlon, Ciarán Fisher, Anne-Marie Ford, Michelle Hall (online), Seán Kelly, Rachel Kerley, Sionainn McCann, Debbie McCole, Fiona Mhic Conchoille, Pearse McGeough, Shane McGuinness, Andrea McKevitt, Kevin Meenan, Dolores Minogue, Robert Nash, Ejiro O'Hare-Stratton, Declan Power, John Reilly, Pio Smith, John Sheridan, Jim Tenanty, Antóin Watters, Maeve Yore

Apologies: Councillors: Emma Coffey, Eric Donovan, Paddy McQuillan

Officials: David Conway, Chief Executive
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services
Ger Murphy, Director of Services
David Jones, Director of Services
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services
Bernie Woods, Director of Finance
Sinéad Dooley, Meeting Administrator
Finbar Gethins, Senior Executive Officer
Helen Divilly, Head of Information Systems
Olivia McCormack, Senior Executive Officer
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer
William Walsh, Senior Executive Officer
Robert Page, Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Joanna Kelly, Senior Planner
John O'Hagan, Senior Engineer
Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer
David Hanratty, Senior Engineer
Gavin McLaughlin, Communications Officer
Susan Deery, Administrative Officer

Minute No. 65/25

Minutes of Meeting held on 17th February 2025

The Minutes were:-

Proposed by: Cllr. Andrea McKevitt

Seconded by: Cllr. James Byrne
And Approved

Minute No. 66/25

Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 28th February 2025 and 6th March 2025

The Minutes were:-

Proposed by: Cllr. John Sheridan
Seconded by: Cllr. Bernie Conlon
And Approved

Minute No. 67/25

Minutes of District Meetings – for noting

- Borough District of Drogheda 13th January 2025
- Municipal District of Dundalk 14th January 2025
- Municipal District of Ardee 6th February 2025
- Borough District of Drogheda 10th February 2025
- Municipal District of Dundalk 11th February 2025

Minute No. 68/25

Minutes of Committee Meetings – for noting

- Corporate Policy Group – 4th February 2025

Minute No. 69/25

Report from Chairperson of Corporate Policy Group

A report was delivered by the Chairperson of the Corporate Policy Group, Cllr. Kevin Callan, on proceedings from the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 5th February 2025.

It was noted that agreement was reached where all future Section 183 Notices would be issued to members electronically.

Minute No. 70/25

Strategic Policy Committee Chairpersons Report

Cllr. Pio Smith, Chair of the Economic Development SPC provided an update from the February meeting where members of Drogheda and Dundalk BIDS & Chamber of Commerce were invited to attend.

Cllr. James Byrne, Chair of the Climate Action SPC deferred his report until the April monthly meeting, however, confirmed that a Draft Programme of Works is underway.

Cllr. Rachel Kerley, Chair of the Planning SPC confirmed a work programme would be ready for the next monthly meeting.

Minute No. 71/25

Approval of Attendance at Conferences

The list as put to the meeting was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Pio Smith
Seconded by: Cllr. Antóin Watters
And resolved.

Minute No. 72/25

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. 73/25

Adoption of Service Delivery Plan

Joe McGuinness, Director of Services presented the 2025 Service Delivery Plan advising that while the Plan assumes a new format this year, it takes account of, and is consistent with, the Budget for 2025 and the Corporate Plan 2024-2029.

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
Seconded by: Cllr. Pio Smith
And Adopted

Minute No. 74/25

Section 183 – Proposed Disposal of 89 Moneymore, Drogheda, Co. Louth

The disposal of property at 89 Moneymore, Drogheda, Co, Louth was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Meave Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. James Byrne
And resolved

Minute No. 75/25

Section 183 – Proposed Disposal of 171 Moneymore, Drogheda, Co. Louth

The disposal of property at 171 Moneymore, Drogheda, Co, Louth was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Meave Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. James Byrne
And resolved

Minute No. 76/25

Section 183 – Proposed Disposal of Moneymore Childcare Centre, Roaches Lane, Moneymore, Drogheda, Co. Louth

The disposal of property at Moneymore Childcare Centre, Roaches Lane, Moneymore, Drogheda, Co, Louth was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Meave Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. James Byrne
And resolved.

Minute No. 77/25

Section 183 – Proposed Disposal of lands at Ecco Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth

The disposal of lands at Ecco Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
Seconded by: Cllr. Ciaran Fisher
And resolved.

Minute No. 78/25

Section 183 – Proposed Disposal of lands at Navy Bank, Dundalk, Co. Louth

The disposal of lands at Navy Bank, Dundalk, Co, Louth was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Sean Kelly
Seconded by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
And resolved.

Minute No. 79/25

Section 183 – Proposed Disposal of property at No. 10 Riverside Crescent, Dundalk, Co. Louth to David Newell.

The disposal of property at No. 10 Riverside Crescent, Dundalk, Co, Louth to David Newell was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Meenan
Seconded by: Cllr. Sean Kelly
And resolved.

Minute No. 80/25

Vacancy on Creative Spark Board

The resignation of Councillor Shane McGuinness resulted in a vacancy on the Creative Spark Board.

Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt was appointed to the vacancy on the:-

Proposal of: Cllr. Sean Kelly
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Meenan
And resolved

Minute No. 81/25

Vacancy on the Carlingford Louth Commission

The resignation of Councillor Andrea McKeivitt resulted in a vacancy on the Carlingford Louth Commission.

Cllr. John Reilly was appointed to the vacancy on the:-

Proposal of: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt
Seconded by: Cllr. Sean Kelly
And resolved

Minute No. 82/25

Nomination to Bru Na Boinne Forum / Steering Group

It was agreed that nomination to this group should be referred to the Drogheda Borough District meeting.

Proposal of: Cllr. James Byrne
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
And resolved

Minute No. 83/25

Local Authority Home Loan Allocation for 2025

The Local Authority Home Loan Allocation for 2025 was approved following:-

Proposal of: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Meenan
And resolved

Minute No. 84/25

Arts Grant Funding Awards 2025

The Arts Grant Funding Awards for 2025 were duly noted.

Minute No. 85/25

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 all activities and operations of Bodies, Boards and

Committees to which they are elected, appointed or nominated to represent Louth County Council), reports were given on the following bodies/boards/committees by the following Councillors:

- Cllr Andrea McKeivitt reported that the Rural Water Programme has not yet met. Joe McGuinness, Director of Services, proposed that this group should be re-established
- Cllr Andrea McKeivitt reported that the Peace Partnership has not yet met.

Minute No. 86/25

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

Support Services

- No matters raised.

Strategic Economic Development

The following was highlighted in relation to Strategic Economic Development:

- It was confirmed that 80 Festival Grant applications were received with 65 of those approved, totalling €200,000
- The Tain Trail will be finalised in the coming weeks
- Confirmation received that notice has been served on unauthorised signage throughout the county. Data will be provided separately to the members on this matter. Proprietors have 30 days to respond
- Shops with illegal products for sale is a matter which should be referred to the Customs
- Failte Ireland will be contacted to determine if the “Attraction of scale for Drogheda” report has been released and is available for sharing with members
- Funding in the region of €6.5m for Carlingford Louth was welcomed by the members
- Figures were requested by the members on planning applications which require “Further Information”
- Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services will revert with clarity in respect of a Dangerous Structure Notice issued recently concerning a derelict house in Omeath
- Praise was given to the Fire Prevention section of the council regarding the recent improvement in fire statistics
- Concern was raised regarding the verification of persons making submissions on planning applications. Joanna Kelly, Senior Planner advised that anyone with concerns should contact the Planning Authority with details
- Confirmation received that Dundalk Port remains the property of Dublin Port
- “Real Time” employment figures were requested from the LEO Office i.e. jobs lost v's jobs created, however, Thomas McEvoy, Director of Service explained that the jobs created stats are from the LEO portfolio of clients and are a narrow slice of the economy
- The Local Enterprise Week was acknowledged by the members
- Data was requested as to how many applications have been received from constituents who requested their building to be included in the Protected Structure Register. Applications are open until 30th April with a low response to date. Clarity was received that applications are also welcome from persons who may wish to remove their property from the register

Placemaking & Physical Development

The following was noted in relation to Placemaking and Physical Development:

- The long-term lease of the DYD building has not yet been signed, however, confirmation was received that the tenants shall be temporarily facilitated in an alternative building should works on West Gate House progress in the future
- Work on the Bellurgan project will be brought to members via a Section 38 Notice and work will be carried out during school holidays
- Clarification was given that, as a pilot project, there is one solar light on the Greenway which is currently being monitored to determine adequacy/performance
- Briefing on the Carlingford Greenore Flood Relief works will be provided to Members
- Messaging on water safety and lifebuoys will be considered in consultation with the Communications Officer
- The council will investigate land ownership around the Bellewsbridge area re. parking facilities for match day visitors, however, visitors should be ensuring they are parked legally
- RDF Funding application is proceeding for Carlingford and as such, a commitment cannot be made in respect of Carlingford Tennis Courts at present which may be relocated under the project design
- A MUGA Programme of Works is progressing for the playpark in Omeath
- The emptying of bins in Carlingford over a Bank Holiday weekend will be reassessed
- A draft EV Strategy is nearing completion and sanction to employ an EV Officer is currently with the Department for approval
- A technical team has already been on site at the Magnet in Dundalk to assess road safety measures and confirmation received that funding will be prioritised for this location for safety works
- The council will contact Google Maps to ascertain if anything can be done to alleviate HGV's using local roads around Kilcurry and Haggardstown, however, confirmation was received that the long-term solution to this problem is a Link Road which is included in the County Development Plan
- Speed checks for the John Kirk Park and R166 were noted for future consideration
- Ongoing littering problems around the North & Mid Louth area was noted while the Tidy Towns Committees were acknowledged. An awareness campaign is currently ongoing around the provision of dog fouling in the county
- Traffic congestion in the area of the M1 Retail Park in Drogheda was noted with engagement welcome with the retail park management team and owners
- Notice boards in playgrounds which have recently been installed were commended by the members
- The council will assess land ownership around the Greenway in Omeath for bike sheds for Louth Disability Cycling Group
- A development programme of works for MUGA pitches is in place which will help assist with issues such as floodlighting etc.
- The council will assess changing facilities for sea swimmers. A new group has been established to deal with funding applications etc.
- Traffic safety survey to be assessed on roads in Townspark, Ardee which are not suitable for large vehicles

Organisational Development

The matters noted in relation to Organisational Development included:-

- A tender report has been received regarding the Dundalk Athletics Track and a solution has been found to staff the Lourdes Stadium on days which bookings are in place
- Costs incurred in addressing illegal dumping of diesel can be recouped from the Department. While it is considered that CCTV may provide some assistance in addressing the issue in certain areas it is unlikely to be the sole solution
- Chomhghairdeachas a rinne na baill leis an gcomhairle ar a gceiliúradh le haghaidh Seachtain na Gaeilge agus chuir siad fáilte roimh chur i bhfeidhm na Scéime Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta. Members congratulated the council on its celebrations for Seachtain na Gaeilge and welcomed the introduction of the Gaeltacht Scholarship Scheme. Suggestions for future iterations of the Scholarship Scheme were noted
- The council are not obliged to seek proof of waste contracts from businesses but under By Laws can issue a notice seeking to determine where waste is going
- The Healthy Louth Team were acknowledged for their work on the Community Connect Calendar which is considered a valuable resource for communities
- The ongoing issue of scramblers in Fatima and Coxes Demesne was discussed. It was noted the Garda are taking more responsibility for the scramblers whilst on public roads but scramblers accessing Council lands remained a matter for LCC to address

Social Development

The following was highlighted in relation to Social Development:

- It was noted that it was too early to confirm the cost effectiveness of the use of 3D construction technology, but LCC is continuing to engage with the Department in respect of future recourse to such technology
- The number of housing applications refused due to income thresholds was requested. Ger Murphy, Director of Services, undertook to revert with figures while also noting that the number would be small as many potential applicants spoke with LCC in advance of applying
- It was queried if the Vacant Refurbishment Grant was administrative heavy noting that while 182 applications had been approved funding was only issued to 44 applicants. Director of Services Ger Murphy confirmed that the scheme was administrative heavy and for good reason but also noted that it was just one of a myriad of schemes in operation
- A commitment was given to consider how statistics in respect of the Disabled Person Grant could be reflected in the monthly report going forward
- It was confirmed that, while it can differ from Local Authority to Local Authority, Carers Allowance is taken into consideration by LCC in determining eligibility for rent schemes with confirmation received that it was taken into account as per the local authorities Rent Scheme
- Concerns were raised in respect of housing transfers taking place across platforms such as Facebook. Ger Murphy advised that the area of Housing Transfers did pose issues which LCC was constantly considering how best to address. He confirmed that in so far as possible that all efforts were made to facilitate housing transfers but the priority was to provide houses first and foremost

Minute No. 87/25

Congratulations

Congratulations were extended to Ms. Kate O'Connor on her recent sporting accomplishments and to her father Michael and extended family.

Congratulations were also extended to the Louth GAA team particularly Brian Byrne & Tommy Durnin.

The Local Enterprise Office Student Enterprise Programme was also congratulated by the members.

Minute No. 88/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Ciaran Fisher

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Callan

That Louth County Council write to the Minister for Finance to provide 2 million of discretionary funding from the €14 billion surplus from the Apple Tax ruling, to Louth County Council and the 30 other local authorities across Ireland.

Reply: David Hanratty, A/Director of Organisational Development

This is a matter for the Members.

Minute No. 89/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Rachel Kerley

Seconded: Cllr. Dolores Minogue

That Louth County Council will review the current policy regarding the moratorium of new public lighting with the objective to end the moratorium.

Reply: David Jones, Director of Placemaking and Physical Development

Louth County Council has circa 14,300 public lights throughout the County which falls under its remit to maintain.

Budget provision is made through the annual Revenue Budget to cover the maintenance costs associated with this quantum of public lighting, including energy costs.

It is important to note that since the introduction of the moratorium on the installation of new public lighting, introduced in order to manage recurring energy and maintenance costs, circa 900 public lights have still be added to the Council's stock of public lighting as a result of the Taking in Charge process of estates, and new lighting provided as part of various grant fund schemes such as Town & Village Renewal and Low Cost Safety Measures.

Accordingly, in a similar vein, additional public lighting will continue to be added to stock as a result of same on an ongoing basis in the future, thus increasing maintenance and energy costs as a result.

In addition, the matter of concentric cabling, which was typically installed in public lighting installations from the 1970s to the 1990s, is not complaint with current electrical standards, which means that any faults that relate to such cables require a full cable replacement, thereby adding considerable additional costs to repair works where such a scenario arises. Unfortunately, such instances are becoming more common and will impact on the available budget provision into the future.

Significant investment is being provided for by Louth County Council through our Capital Programme in respect of the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP), which involves the surveying of our entire public lighting stock, design and retrofit to LED lighting. This remains the priority of the Council in terms of investment in our public lighting network.

Consequently, in the context outlined above, the opportunity to deviate from the current moratorium is deemed limited.

Minute No. 90/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Anne-Marie Ford

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Callan

I call on the councillors of Louth County Council to support the motion that we prioritise the children of Ireland through promotion of a strategic early intervention approach in education and service provision for children and their parents, to ensure that every child regardless of the challenges they may face, can realise their full potential and contribute to society as investment in education is an investment in all our futures.

Reply: Joe McGuinness, Director of Organisational Development

This is a matter for the members.

Minute No. 91/25

On the **Proposal** of Cllr. Kevin Callan, **Seconded by** Cllr. Antoin Watters, Standing Orders were suspended to complete the remaining items on the Agenda.

Minute No. 92/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Fiona Mhic Conchoille

Seconded: Cllr. Antoin Watters

That this council engage a qualified noise consultant to carry out a comprehensive noise pollution survey along Lower Shore Road in Omeath.

The objective of this survey would be to accurately measure and assess the background noise levels originating from Warrenpoint Port and which is impacting the local community within the jurisdiction of County Louth. Additionally, the measurements recorded should determine whether these noise levels exceed the permissible noise limits established by European/or National regulations.

This study would provide valuable insights into the environmental impact of port operations on the surrounding community.

Reply: Joe McGuinness, Director of Organisational Development

Louth County Council Environment section will carry out noise assessments in Omeath, with a view to gathering required information to gauge possible impacts on residents in the affected area.

Minute No. 93/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Michelle Hall

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Callan

*Louth County Council will, agree **in principle** that funding is allocated to each local authority from central Government to upgrade the access officer role, develop a standard national approach to UN CRPD implantation and to implement this approach, once agreed, at local level. This Council will, work together as elected members, with our council colleagues and any other relevant stakeholders, including people with disabilities, to achieve the afore mentioned, by writing to An Taoiseach, An Tánaiste and the Minister for Children, Disability and Equality, Norma Foley, T.D and the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne, T.D.*

Reply: Joe McGuinness, Director of Organisational Development

This is a matter for the members as the motion is seeking a national approach

Minute No. 94/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Michelle Hall

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Callan

Louth County Council will create a plan for varied cycle parking in Co. Louth as per Cycle Design Manual. Parking will address the need for safe, direct, coherent, attractive and comfortable parking. For long stay parking, either overnight or where bikes are regularly parked for much of the day, this council will provide shelter from weather and secure access (i.e. not open to the passing public). This plan will help increase the uptake of cycling in Co. Louth.

Reply: David Jones, Director of Placemaking and Physical Development

The Council is committed to providing increased cycle parking facilities across the County so as to facilitate and promote active travel.

It is recognised that the availability of secure cycle parking influences the decision to travel by bicycle.

In respect of our proposed Active Travel projects, the design philosophy captures the need to ensure that safe, secure parking is available at the start and end of routes and at key locations, where possible.

Where the demand for cycle parking is identified as part of an individual Active Travel project or elsewhere in respect of Local Transport Plans, any cycle parking provision will be in accordance with Section 6 of the Cycle Design Manual, and depending on the locations, these may be low cost on-street parking i.e. bicycle stands or higher specification (lockers) depending on the environment.

It is noted that the installation of such infrastructure is reliant on NTA funding.

Minute No. 95/25

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Kevin Meenan

Seconded: Cllr. Antoin Watters

Louth County Council fully recognises the positive role the Tenant In Situ Scheme has played in preventing families entering homelessness.

To prevent more families becoming homeless through no fault of their own, we call on the Department of Housing to agree targets for the scheme and release funding to Louth County Council as a matter of urgency.

Reply from Joe McGuinness, Director of Organisational Development

This is a matter for the members

Minute No. 96/25

Notice of Question: Cllr Ciaran Fisher

In the next county meeting, I would like to ask for the number of fines issued for 1) Dog Fouling and 2) Fixed Penalties issued, and followed up on, for repeat offenders under the Waste Presentation Bye-Laws.

Are we approaching a position to put CCTV in problem areas yet?

Reply: Joe McGuinness, Director of Organisational Development

- 1) 5 dog fouling fixed penalty notices were issued in 2024.
- 2) 17 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued under the Segregation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste Bye Laws 2019.
- 3) In relation to CCTV for the investigation of Litter and Waste Crime, the Oversight Board has been established and data protection documentation produced, we are currently examining options for procuring CCTV equipment and services.

Notice of Question: Cllr Antóin Watters

"How many planning applications have been made to Louth County Council in Rural Zone 1 & 2, over the last 12 months. Can you please provide details of the decision made, and the number in each Municipal District. Can you provide the results in list or table form".

Reply: Thomas McEvoy, Director of Strategic Economic Development

Breakdown of decisions made for one off housing between 1st January and 31st December 2024 in Rural Policy Zones 1 and 2								
	Ardee Municipal District		Dundalk Municipal District		Drogheda Municipal District		County Louth	
	Rural Policy Zone 1	Rural Policy Zone 2	Rural Policy Zone 1	Rural Policy Zone 2	Rural Policy Zone 1	Rural Policy Zone 2	Rural Policy Zone 1	Rural Policy Zone 2
Grant	6	31	8	14	5	5	19	50
Refusal	5	19	5	4	4	10	14	33
Further Information	1	24	2	7	1	1	4	32
Total	12	74	15	25	10	16	37	115

Notice of Question: Cllr Fiona MhicConchoille

Can Louth County Council confirm the following:

- 1. Has a title search been conducted on The Dublin House in Omeath, a derelict, unsightly building, for many years, in a prime location facing onto both R173 and the main street, where the public realm scheme was recently completed.*
- 2. Is it listed on the Derelict Site / Structure Register? if not why not?*
- 3. Is LCC fulfilling its responsibility by ensuring there is no risk to the public from this dangerous structure and actively enforcing Derelict Site Legislation against its owner(s)?*

Reply: Thomas McEvoy, Director of Strategic Economic Development

- 1.The property is not registered on the land registry; however a possible owner has been identified.
- 2.Dublin House is not currently on the Derelict Sites Register; however, the site has recently been inspected with a view to commencing this process.
- 3.A Dangerous Structure Notice was issued in relation to one part of the structure in 2024. There has been no response to date.

Minute No. 97/25

Any other Business

It was determined that the forthcoming Civic Reception for Eve McCrystal and Kate O'Connor would be elevated from Dundalk Municipal District to Louth County Council.

Minute No. 98/25

Correspondence

Members noted the following correspondence:

- Sligo County Council 11th February 2025
- South Dublin County Council 13th February 2025
- Roscommon County Council 17th February 2025
- Donegal County Council 27th February 2025
- Sligo County Council 4th March 2025
- Clare County Council 10th March 2025

There being no other business, Cllr. Kevin Callan expressed thanks to the Members, staff and press, and the meeting concluded.

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

Date: 28th April '25

Cathaoirleach: Kevin Callan

Meeting Administrator: Sinead Dooley