



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

Cruinniú Míósúil 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, 20th April 2026, at 10:00a.m.

In Attendance:

Presiding: Councillor Seán Kelly – Cathaoirleach

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, Kevin Callan, Bernie Conlon, Eric Donovan, Ciarán Fisher, Anne-Marie Ford, Michelle Hall Rachel Kerley, Sionainn McCann, Pearse McGeough, Shane McGuinness, Fiona MhicConchoille, Kevin Meenan, Robert Nash, Ejiro O'Hare Stratton, Declan Power, John Reilly, John Sheridan, Pío Smith, Jim Tenanty, Antóin Watters, Maeve Yore.

Apologies: Councillors: Andrea McKevitt, Debbie McCole, Paddy McQuillan, James Byrne, Emma Coffey, Dolores Minogue

Officials: David Conway, Chief Executive
Joanna Kelly, Acting Director of Services
Bernadette Woods, Director of Finance
David Hanratty, Acting Director of Services
David Jones, Director of Services
Ger Murphy, Director of Services
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services
Sinéad Dooley, Meetings Administrator
Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer
Olivia McCormack, Senior Executive Officer
Helen Divilly, Head of Information Systems
Susan Deery, Administrative Officer
Aine Roddy, Assistant Communications Officer
Paula Keenan, A/Senior Executive Officer
Grainne Fogarty, Senior Staff Officer
Finbar Gethins, Senior Executive Officer
Amanda Brannigan, County Librarian
Roisin McAuley, Financial Accountant
Brian Lynch, Financial Accountant
John O'Hagan, Senior Engineer
Nikki Campbell, Head of Local Enterprise Office
Turlough King, A/Senior Planner
Sinead McVerry, Administrative Officer
Gavin McLaughlin, Communications Officer

Minute No. 77/26

Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 23rd March 2026

The Minutes were:-

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Shane McGuinness
And Approved.

Minute No. 78/26

Matters Arising

- Cllr. Yore referred to Minute No. 65/26 and requested an update on Brigid's Way. Senior Executive Officer, Ms. Olivia McCormack, advised that consultants have been appointed, and that an Options Paper is expected by mid-summer 2026.
- Cllr. Fisher raised concerns regarding e-scooters and mobility hubs. Director of Services, Mr. David Jones, advised that mobility hubs are designed to provide a range of shared transport options, including e-scooters, in line with Department direction. He further advised that e-scooters have been legal on public roads since May 2024 under the Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023. While recognising the potential benefits of e-scooters, he acknowledged that there are associated concerns, and that appropriate safeguards and awareness initiatives will be required.
- Cllr. Butler requested an update on the Taking in Charge timelines. Director of Services, Mr. McEvoy, confirmed that a reviewed and up-to-date listing will be circulated to Members in due course.

Minute No. 79/26

Minutes of District Meetings – for noting

- Municipal District of Ardee 5th March 2026

Minute No. 80/26

Minutes of Committee Meetings – for noting

No minutes were included for noting.

Minute No. 81/26

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 April 2026.

Minute No. 82/26

Strategic Policy Committee Chairpersons Report

Cllr. Kevin Meenan provided an update from the March meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee for Social Development.

Minute No. 83/26

Approval of Attendance at Conferences and Training Events

The list as put to the meeting was:-

Proposed by: Cllr. Michelle Hall
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
And Resolved.

Minute No. 84/26

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 was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
And Resolved.

Minute No. 85/26

Annual Financial Statement 2025

In accordance with Section 108 of the Local Government Act, 2001 Members considered the Draft Annual Financial Statement for 2025 as presented to them by Director of Finance Ms. Bernadette Woods.

The revised expenditure for the financial year ended 31st December 2025 as set out in Note 16 to the Accounts was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
Seconded by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
And Adopted.

The transfers to and from Capital as per the associated report was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
And Adopted.

Minute No. 86/26

S183 – Disposal of Surplus Lands to Ballymakenny Residential Properties Ltd., Drogheda, Co. Louth – 0.745 hectares

The proposed disposal of 0.745 hectares of Surplus Lands no longer required for any of the functions of this Council at Yellowbatter, Drogheda to Ballymakenny Residential Properties Ltd., Drogheda, Co. Louth was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. John Sheridan
And Resolved.

Minute No. 87/26

Outdoor Recreation Plan, Sports Plan and Play Policy

Members noted the Outdoor Recreation Plan, Sports Plan, and Play Policy as presented by A/Director of Services, Ms. Joanna Kelly.

All three plans were broadly welcomed by Members, with positive discussion focusing on their clear vision, anticipated benefits, and the strong, forward-looking objectives outlined. Members also acknowledged and commended the extensive preparatory work undertaken in developing the plans, including four public consultation surveys, one of which was specifically designed to engage with young people across the county.

Further discussion centred on the provision of greenspaces to support play and recreation. Members highlighted the potential need to address the current shortage of accessible greenspaces and suggested that this issue may require further consideration within the County Development Plan in the future.

Members reviewed the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out within the plans and expressed concerns that some lacked sufficient precision. Cllr. Hall proposed that the KPI/metric under Action 5 ("Leadership") within the Louth Outdoor Recreation Plan be amended from "*Number of funding applications made*" to "*Number of funding applications successful*," in order to better reflect outcomes. It was also suggested that, in the absence of confirmed budgets, delivery dates be removed.

The proposed amendments were accepted, on the proposal of Cllr. Hall and seconded by Cllr. Smith.

The Outdoor Recreation Plan, Sports Plan and Play Policy were then:

Proposed by: Cllr. Robert Nash
Seconded by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
And Adopted.

Minute No. 88/26

Local Authority Home Loan and Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Allocation for 2026

In accordance with Section 106(7) of the Local Government Act, 2001 and as presented by Director of Services, Ger Murphy, Members agreed to the drawdown of €6,730,000 from the Housing Finance Agency for the purpose of Home Loans under the Local Authority Home Loan and Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Scheme for 2026 and subsequent years.

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Meenan
And Resolved.

Minute No. 89/26

LCDC Annual Report 2025

Members noted the Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2025 submitted to the Local Authority in accordance with Section 128B of the Local Government Act, 2001.

Minute No. 90/26

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, 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. Reilly reported on the Carlingford Lough Commission meetings which took place between April 2025 and February 2026.
- Cllr. Meenan reported on the North-East Region Homeless Forum meeting which took place on 12th March 2026.
- Cllr. Smith reported on the AILG meeting which took place on 22nd January 2026.

Minute No. 91/26

Report on reports submitted to the Cathaoirleach under Section 142 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended.

Director of Services Mr. Thomas McEvoy advised that a report on the recent visit to New York and Toronto would be shared with Members within the coming days.

Minute No. 92/26

Age Friendly Strategy

A/Director of Services, Ms. Joanna Kelly, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the County Louth Age Friendly Strategy 2026–2031, developed by the Louth Age Friendly Alliance. The Strategy sets out eight core goals aligned with the World Health Organization's Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities themes. It also incorporates cross-cutting objectives consistent with the Local Economic and Community Plan 2024–2029 and is fully aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Members welcomed the Strategy and expressed strong support for its direction and ambition. They commended the significant work undertaken by officials in preparing a clear, cohesive, and forward-thinking document. In particular, Members engaged in focused discussion on the need for a national policy framework to support and safeguard the right-sizing of housing tenants. It was emphasised that such a policy should ensure individuals who choose to right-size are facilitated to remain within their own communities, thereby preserving social connections and supporting continued independent living.

Minute No. 93/26

Civic Protocols

Members considered the Draft Civic Protocols which were developed to provide assistance and guidance, particularly to those newly elected.

The Protocols were approved as:

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Rachel Kerley
And Adopted.

Minute No. 94/26

East Border Region 50th Anniversary presentation to Council

Chief Executive of the East Border Region, Ms. Pamela Arthurs, delivered a comprehensive and informative presentation marking the milestone 50th Anniversary of the organisation.

The presentation was noted and congratulations were extended on this significant achievement, with support expressed for continued and future collaboration.

Minute No. 95/26

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

Finance and System Support

No issues were highlighted in relation to Finance and System Support.

Economic Delivery

The following was noted in relation to Economic Delivery:

- The non-statutory consultation on identifying potential lands to accommodate future housing growth in County Louth closed on 8 April 2026. It was noted that the outcomes will inform the National Planning Framework and that draft legislation, expected to be enacted later the year, will require housing targets to be incorporated through a variation of the County Development Plan.
- A commissioned report on the maintenance of Muiredach's Cross will be circulated to the Members.
- Tributes were paid to Mr. Martin McElligott of Dundalk BIDs following his announcement of his intention to step down from the role in the coming months.
- Under the Living City Initiative, applications are now open to the general public, with further details on next steps to be issued by the Department of Finance.

Operations and Environment Delivery

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

- Monitoring of litter reporting at Mount Avenue will continue. To date, Wardens have inspected the area on five occasions, with no instances of excessive litter identified. Separately, discussions are ongoing regarding a review of the Litter Bye-Laws, with a view to a potential amendment.
- Details of vacant Casual Trading Bays will be circulated to Members in due course.
- Pothole repair works are ongoing across the county, with approximately 3,500 repairs completed in recent weeks. Locations requiring further attention are to be reported for follow-up.
- Reports were noted regarding street lighting outages within Drogheda town centre.

HR, Corporate and Community Delivery

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

- The Public Engagement element of the Muirhevnamor Master Plan is currently being finalised.

- It was acknowledged that there is significant work underway in updating the Property Interest Register which will allow for future reporting of all assets.
- The proposed Community Gardens at the Redeemer Football Pitch was discussed with confirmation received that this matter will be discussed at the Climate Change & Sustainability SPC.

Minute No. 96/26

Suspension of Standing Orders

In accordance with Standing Order Number 89, the Standing Orders were suspended to allow for the conclusion of business on the agenda.

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Marianne Butler
And Resolved.

Housing and Culture Delivery

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

- An increased budget has been allocated for Housing Adaptation Grants in 2026. Applications will close in the coming weeks to allow sufficient time for assessment, completion of works, and submission of claims within the financial year. Further public communications will issue regarding completion of application forms.
- Confirmation was provided that the *Right Sizing* option remains available to eligible applicants in accordance with the Scheme of Allocations.
- Density levels and associated costs under the Affordable Housing Scheme were discussed. This matter is under consideration by the Department of Housing as part of the National Housing Plan. Several applications have been submitted by the Council; however, no response has been received to date.
- Housing transfers on medical grounds are currently under review. While the availability of suitable units for this cohort remains challenging, potential options are being actively explored.

Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Delivery

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

- A review of the URDF Call 3 Programme may take place between July and September 2026; however, the process remains fluid, with over 125 properties currently under assessment. Engagement with property owners is ongoing, with a particular focus on properties with active planning permission, to ensure works commence within the required timeframe.
- Funding of €10 million has been approved by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) for the development of the N53. The appointment of a contractor is expected in the coming months, with works anticipated to commence later this year.
- The Link Road to the Red Cow Roundabout under the R177 Capital Programme is currently at design stage, with the appointment of the design consultant progressing.
- Funding for works at Dundalk Fire Station was welcomed, with plans in place to progress the project to tender later this year.

Minute No. 97/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. John Reilly
Seconded: Cllr. Robert Nash

Motion: Cllr. John Reilly

"That Louth County Council write to the Minister to request the inclusion of South Armagh in the Ireland's Ancient East website."

Reply: T. McEvoy, Director of Economic Delivery

This is a matter for the members.

Minute No. 98/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Maeve Yore

Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Meenan

Motion: Cllr. Kevin Meenan

"That Louth County Council identifies a funding source for the appointment of a dedicated, full-time and fully resourced Access and Inclusion Officer.

This appointment is sought to ensure the Council fully meets its statutory obligations under Section 26 of the Disability Act 2005 and to align with the European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020.

This motion also calls on Louth County Council to prepare a report on additional measures it has taken to enact the provisions of the Disability Act 2005, in the last 5 years, and this report to be shared with councillors and disability groups in the county."

Reply: Joanna Kelly, A/Director of HR, Corporate and Community Delivery

Staffing matters, including the appointment of an Access and Inclusion Officer, is the responsibility of the Executive of Louth County Council.

As per the legislation, there is an access officer so designated in Louth County Council, details of which are available on the website.

Louth County Council can examine the feasibility of preparing a report which details measures taken to enact the provisions of the Disability Act 2005.

Minute No. 99/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Sionainn McCann

Seconded: Cllr. Michelle Hall

Motion: Cllr. Sionainn McCann

That Louth County Council:

- Supports equal access to toilet facilities for people with chronic and invisible illnesses*
 - Recognises the need for 'No Wait Cards' to be placed on a statutory footing for people with chronic and invisible illnesses who require urgent access to toilet facilities.*
 - Develops a voluntary 'No Wait' initiative, which invites local businesses to participate by allowing urgent toilet access to people who hold a valid a 'No Wait Card.'*
 - Provides recognition or incentives to business for their participation in the 'No Wait' initiative, through promotional material such as window stickers, or through advertising in local business networks.*
 - Works with the relevant health organisations and disability groups to raise awareness of the initiative with retail businesses.*
- Undertakes to ensure toilets are provided as a standard service in areas under Council control.*

Glaonn an rún ar Comhairle Contae Lú chun:

- *Tacú le rochtain chothrom ar áiseanna leithris do dhaoine a bhfuil gnáthgalar agus tinneas dofheicthe orthu.*
- *Aithnítear an gá atá le 'No Wait Cards' a chur ar bhonn reachtúil le haghaidh daoine a bhfuil gnáthgalar agus tinneas dofheicthe orthu a dteastaíonn rochtain phráinneach uathu ar áiseanna leithris.*
- *Forbraíonn sé tionscnamh deonach 'No Wait', a thugann cuireadh do ghnólachtaí áitiúla páirt a ghlacadh trí rochtain leithris a cheadú do dhaoine a bhfuil 'No Wait Card' bailí acu.*
- *Tugeann sé aitheantas agus dreasachtaí do ghnó as rannpháirtíocht a glacadh sa tionscnamh 'No Wait', tríd ábhar bolscaireachta a chur ar fáil ar nós greamáin fuinneoige, nó tríd fógraíochtaí i líonraí gnólachtaí áitiúla.*
- *Oibriú le na heagraíochtaí sláinte agus na grúpaí míchumais ábhartha chun gnólachtaí a chur ar an eolas faoin tionscnamh.*
- *Gealltanais chun a chinntiú go gcuirtear leithris ar fáil mar sheirbhís chaighdeánach i gceantaireacha faoi rialú an Comhairle.*

Reply: Joanna Kelly, A/Director of HR, Corporate and Community Delivery

Louth County Council notes the motion and acknowledges the challenges faced by people with chronic and invisible illnesses in accessing toilet facilities.

In the absence of the 'No wait' initiative being on a statutory footing, and if the Members agree with the motion, the Council could write to Chambers of Commerce inviting local businesses to develop a 'No wait' initiative and to also invite relevant health organisations and disability groups to raise awareness of the initiative.

The Council also undertakes to ensure, where reasonable and practicable, the availability of toilets as part of any future development proposals.

Tugann Comhairle Contae Lú faoi deara an tairiscint agus aithníonn sí go mbíonn deacrachtaí ag daoine a bhfuil galair ainsealacha agus galair dofheicthe orthu leithris a úsáid.

Faoi láthair, níl bonn dlí leis an tionscnamh 'Gan Fanacht'. Má aontaíonn na Comhaltaí leis an tairiscint, d'fhéadfadh an Chomhairle scríobh chuig Cumainn Tráchtála chun gnólachtaí áitiúla a spreagadh páirt a ghlacadh sa tionscnamh 'Gan Fanacht'. D'fhéadfaí freisin eagraíochtaí sláinte agus grúpaí míchumais a spreagadh chun daoine a chur ar an eolas faoin tionscnamh.

Geallann an Chomhairle freisin go ndéanfaidh sí a dícheall leithris a chur ar fáil mar chuid d'fhorbairtí nua agus de thograí forbartha amach anseo, nuair is féidir é sin a dhéanamh.

Minute No. 100/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Michelle Hall

Seconded: Cllr. Pío Smith

"That Louth County Council will write to the Minister for Health to legislate for a ban on the importation and sale of non-therapeutic vapes and all disposable vapes (devices that can't be recharged, or reused), including those with or without nicotine and to allow and regulate the sale of therapeutic vapes at pharmacies. Vaping should be banned for all under 18 years and be accessed with a prescription only for those wishing to quit smoking or manage a nicotine dependency. Penalties should be aimed at commercial suppliers and not individuals".

Reply: Joanna Kelly, A/Director of HR, Corporate and Community Delivery

This is a matter for the members.

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

Date: 18th May '26

Cathaoirleach: 

Meeting Administrator: Sinead Dwyer