

## **Municipal District of Dundalk - February 2022**

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Dundalk hosted remotely over MS Teams on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 at 5.15 p.m.

**In attendance: All Attendees were remote**

**Cathaoirleach:** Cllr. M. Doyle

**Members:** Councillors M. Butler, E. Coffey E. Corrigan, C. Keelan, S. Kelly, A. McKeivitt, K. Meenan, L. Reilly, J. Reilly, T. Sharkey, A. Watters, M. Yore

**Officials:** Gráinne Tuomey, Meetings Administrator  
Frank Pentony, Director of Services  
John Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer  
Martin McCreesh, Senior Executive Engineer  
Willie Walsh, Senior Executive Officer  
Emer O'Callaghan, Senior Executive Planner  
Brendan McArdle, Assistant Engineer

### **Minute No. 8/22**

#### **Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. Sean Kelly and seconded by Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt.

### **Minute No. 9/22**

#### **Matters Arising**

- Minute No. 4/22 Cllr. Antoin Watters advised that he had requested a copy of the report Louth County Council sent to the Ombudsman in relation to the works at the corner of the promenade in Greenore, which was not mentioned in the minutes and asked that this is now noted
- Minute No. 118/21 ESB report on damage to hedgerows at Balmers Bog is still awaited. Frank Pentony, Director of Services advised a letter had issued but no response received.
- Minute 4/22 An update on the roads included in the gritting route was requested.
- Minute 3/22 Members were advised that there was no response from the Department on the request for further funding on housing maintenance but that a letter had issued.

### **Minute No. 10/22**

#### **Housing Progress Report**

Members discussed the report as issued and John Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer, advised on all Housing items raised.

The rise in refusals of Choice Based Lettings properties was noted and it was confirmed to Members that priority is given to those longest on the waiting list and not on a first come, first served basis after properties go up on system. Applications for properties are open for a week and reasons for refusals are recorded. Invalid reasons for refusals can increase applicant waiting time. A shortage of 4 bed properties was acknowledged.

Halliday Mills - 85 units had all been allocated with 2 refusals. Not all are occupied as yet.

Coxes Phase 2B encountered a short delay and time scale for delivery is pushed back circa one month. Members were advised to refer to the monthly report for delivery data as this is very up to date. John Lawrence advised he was unaware if additional facilities were planned for open space/play areas.

It was confirmed that Louth Housing Section work closely with the Peter McVerry Trust. A recent sleep out by Cooley Parish which raised €107k for the Peter McVerry Trust was praised.

An increase in the amount and the numbers of those in rent arrears was noted by members and a query raised to how this is being addressed. Members were advised that new staff were being assigned to tackle this. It was commented that January can be a difficult time for people and the increase may not be a true reflection.

Over 600 maintenance requests came in over January of which over 200 are outstanding. The Housing Section was requested to address maintenance when looking at rents.

Members were advised that there are circa 3,300 units on HAP. While overcrowding can occur now and again, it is not the role of the Housing Section to police who is in HAP properties as the tenancy agreement is between tenant and landlord and not the local authority.

The Louth Housing Action Plan has been submitted to the Department. Some queries have been raised around target figures by Louth Housing Section to the Department. Home ownership is not part of Louth's Housing Action Plan, but the Housing Section is coordinating with the Department in relation to affordability. The Plan will be brought to members for noting.

### **Minute No. 11/22**

#### **Operations and Marine Progress Report**

Members discussed the report as issued by Martin McCreesh, Senior Executive Engineer and advised on all Operations items raised.

- Speeding at McEntee Avenue causing near misses. It was commented that school wardens on the Avenue are excellent and the road surface is good. However, the Avenue has a lot of elderly pedestrians crossing as does Pearse Park/Carroll Mead and the Friary Youth Club will soon be starting up again which attracts hundreds of young people. Several members raised concerns about pedestrian safety in the area.
- St. Brigid's Day celebrations on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 saw an influx of cars to Faughart Shrine with no facilities to accommodate them. Members advised of no informative or directional signage between different historical sites in area, from the hill to the graveyard and to the well and shrine and that existing signage down at the shrine was

overgrown. A request was made to showcase heritage areas of Louth in particular relating to St. Brigid by several Members. A working group was suggested as was a St. Brigid's Day Parade.

Noting that An Taoiseach had referenced Kildare and not Louth in a St. Brigid's Day address, it was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. John Reilly

**Seconded by:** Cllr. Conor Keelan

That Members send An Taoiseach a formal letter advising that St. Brigid was born in County Louth. The Cathaoirleach suggested that this be an informative letter.

- Urney Graveyard on the Ring of Gullion which is home to the grave of Peadar O'Dornín, famous poet is signposted and promoted by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board even though it is in Louth but is not promoted by Louth. A section of the path of a promoted walk (circa 100m) has been eroded by a river on the Louth side and repair was requested. Promotion of the graveyard was also requested.
- A request for the Heritage Officer to attend the next meeting and advise on signage was made. His response was requested to be emailed to the Cathaoirleach.
- Road safety reviews were requested at various locations including:
  - Drumgooley Cross Junction
  - Armagh Road
  - Mulligan's Shop, Dromiskin - the data given was not accepted by Members
  - Outside Grange/Monksland School - pooling of waters.
- Members were advised that Louth would be making a submission for funding following the announcement of a Grant of €35m for rejuvenation of piers and harbours.
- Members welcomed legislation going through Seanad to allow CCTV to be used for illegal dumping, but were advised that notification of same had not issued to the Authority.
- Traffic Light issues were cited at various locations including:
  - Traffic lights sequence at Lisdoon junction
  - Traffic lights at Green Church requires drivers to pull right up to the yellow box - this will be brought back to see if the loop can be extended
- Footpath issues were raised in various locations. Members were advised operation footpath funding is for repair or trip hazards only and perhaps Active Travel/ Infrastructure could be approached for other items.
- Members were advised that notification of funding on Road Works Programme for 2022 has not yet been received so a timescale cannot be given.
- Accident data for traffic counts sets priority of works.
- 21 solar bins (16 for North Louth, 15 for South Louth) replace existing bins and are not in addition to existing bins. Louth County Council promotes a 'Leave No Trace' policy.
- Members suggested that the moratorium on lighting/bins does not match planning or infrastructure, that where new estates are granted permissions regard should be given to street lighting, footpaths and bins.
- List of sweeper estate schedule will be provided monthly to Members.
- Dowdallshill Graveyard – a request that operations write to plot owners to remind them that no installations are allowed, will be considered.
- LIS scheme has not been prioritised yet. Update email will issue from Majella Nyland.
- A breakdown on where the funding allocated to Anne Street under low cost safety measures which was not spent as the tenders were too high was requested.

- Clean up requested at the entrance to McEntee Park (the Doolargy end).
- Parking fines on pavements have increased from €40 to €80 - advertised on twitter.

The following non operation issues were raised:

- Public lighting requests are a matter for infrastructure.
- Schedule of flushing works by Irish Water to be passed to water services.
- Narrow, incomplete or new footpaths are a matter for infrastructure.

### **Minute No. 12/22**

#### **Bring Banks**

Willie Walsh, Senior Executive Officer presented Members with a report as circulated at the meeting which was well received.

### **Minute No. 13/22**

#### **Part 8 - Muirhevnamore Housing Scheme**

Emer O'Callaghan, Senior Executive Planner advised Members of the proposal for 11 units in under-utilised brownfield land and directed them to the Chief Executive's report. Emer O'Callaghan, Senior Executive Planner advised a couple of submissions have been received in the required period for public consultation, that units are designed to high standard and welcomed questions.

Cllr. Kevin Meenan welcomed this project and advised he was happy to propose it. He said a lot of work had been put in to it. Residents recognised old playgrounds were used for anti social behaviour. He thanked Brendan McArdle, Assistant Engineer for being generous with his time talking to residents and recognised that while not all residents were happy, the majority are.

In accordance with Section 179 (4)(c) of the Planning and Development act 2000 (as amended), it was:

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Kevin Meenan

**Seconded by:** Cllr. Maeve Yore

And resolved that the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's report.

### **Minute No. 14/22**

#### **Dundalk Allocation of Members Community Grants**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Sean Kelly

**Seconded by:** Cllr. Emma Coffey

There being no other business, the meeting concluded.

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

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Cathaoirleach: Mara Doyle

Meeting Administrator: Aisling Quinlan

