

Minutes of the Planning and Support Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held in person in the Cooley Room, County Hall and on Teams on the 3rd March 2026 at 4p.m.

In Attendance

Cllr Rachel Kerley	Louth County Council - Chairperson
Cllr Ciaran Fisher	Louth County Council
Cllr Antoin Watters	Louth County Council
Cllr Emma Coffey	Louth County Council
Cllr Ejiro O'Hare Stratton	Louth County Council (on teams)
Cllr Bernie Conlon	Louth County Council
Vincent Matthews	Development and Construction Interest
Thomas McEvoy	Director of Service
John O'Hagan	Executive Engineer
Jennifer Owens	Youth Work Ireland (on teams)
Pat McCormack	Business & Commercial Interest

Officials

Turlough King	Acting Senior Planner
Frances Hodgers	Staff Officer (on teams)
Louise Watters	Staff Officer (on teams)

Absent

Anthony McArdle	Community and Voluntary Pillar
Kevin Sweeney	Agriculture and Farming Interest
William Walsh	Senior Executive Officer

Cllr Kerley opened the meeting.

1. Minutes of Meeting dated 3rd November 2025

Proposed: Cllr Watters. Seconded: Cllr Fisher. Adopted.

2. Update on Development Plan Review -Dev. Plan 2027 – 2033

Turlough King gave a presentation on the Development plan review. Development Plan currently at the pre-draft stage – key timelines highlighted in addition to an overview of the housing allocation provided to Louth in the 'Housing Growth Requirement Guidelines' published by the DHLGH in July 2025

- Cllr Coffey noted that it was vital that creches, community facilities etc be provided for within the plan, and that appropriate infrastructure was in place prior to developments being built.
- Vincent Matthews raised a query relating to zoning of lands, stating that some lands that were zoned as flood plains, had not flooded in the recent rains, and vice versa. Mr Matthews said that developers would like to be able to access a list of lands that are deemed suitable for development and engage in the decision making process to ensure suitable lands that can be serviced are being brought forward for development. He also raised issues with times

taken to get a pre-planning meeting. Turlough King advised that the Council are engaging with key stakeholders and infrastructure providers in the CDP Review process. In relation to pre-planning Thomas Mc Evoy advised that if a significant development were being proposed, a meeting with a planner could be arranged within 3 to 4 weeks.

- Pat McCormack indicated it is important that lands are zoned in the appropriate locations and that there is close-co-ordination between the Council and infrastructure providers to ensure the infrastructure investment is aligned with the settlements identified for growth. Pat also highlighted the importance of integrating active travel projects into the CDP and the importance of delivering same in promoting more sustainable modes of transport.
- Cllr Watters noted that there would be a number of opportunities during the course of the draft plan stage to look at and discuss the strategic objectives.
- Thomas McEvoy advised that the Draft Development Plan falls under the 2000 Planning Act, and it is hoped to get the Development Plan as soon as possible so that it would be a 6 year plan. However it may be that legislation may change around the summer recess, so it is possible that the council may have do a Variation to the plan, in which case new zoned land will be included.

3. Discussion on Shopfront Policy

A review of the Shopfront Guidance document forms part of the SPC work programme. Turlough King states that the guidelines are a good base, but members can suggest amendments and updates and they will be considered. Cllr Coffey requested that guidelines be circulated to the members and they are given 5 weeks to come back with comments/amendments at the next SPC meeting in May

AOB:

- Cllr Watters raised a query around protected structures and Conservation Grants, and noted the expenditure involved in upgrading protected structures could be off-putting. Turlough King advised importance of keeping vernacular appearance, and that the Department insist on adherence to proper specifications where Grant is applied for.
- Patrick McCormack mentioned shortage of specialised craftspeople to do works required in many instances.

Dates for next meetings are to be determined and circulated, as the dates proposed at this meeting did not suit all members.

Date: Adopted 26th May 2026

Chairperson:



Meeting Administrator:

