



Cornhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

## LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL - CORPORATE POLICY GROUP

Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held in the Setanta Room, County Hall  
Dundalk, and online, on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 09:00am

### **In attendance:**

**Cathaoirleach, Cllr:** Kevin Callan

**Members, Cllrs:** Paula Butterly (online)  
Robert Nash (online)  
Joanna Byrne (online)  
James Byrne (online)

**Apologies, Cllrs:** Pio Smith

**Officials:** Joe McGuinness, Chief Executive  
David Jones, Director of Services  
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services  
Ger Murphy, Director of Services  
Bernie Woods, Director of Finance  
Yvonne O'Brien, A/Director of Services  
Bryan Coughlan, Meetings Administrator

### **1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

The minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were confirmed on the:-

**Proposal of:** Cllr. Kevin Callan  
**Seconded by:** Cllr. Paula Butterly  
And Approved

### **2. Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029: Timelines**

Ger Murphy briefed the meeting on the timelines attached to the new Corporate Plan. An issues paper will be circulated to members, the Local Community Development Committee and the Public Participation Network.

A Draft Corporate Plan will be brought to the Corporate Policy Group on 4<sup>th</sup> December, before going to full Council on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

### **3. Budget 2025**

Joe McGuinness briefed members on the preparation of the budget for 2025. He advised that Directorates were currently preparing for same under the three headings of:

- Savings
- Income
- Expenditure

The Chief Executive cited comments that had been made at the Special County Council meeting the previous evening which suggested the Council had been wasteful and refuted them. Bernie Woods highlighted some spending pressures that are emerging for 2025, including the replacement of the Central Management Charge for water services, additional headcount and pay increases due to national agreements.

### **4. Strategic Policy Committee Formulation**

Joe McGuinness provided an update on the new SPC Scheme which is currently being finalised. Following engagement with Wicklow County Council, Comhairle na nÓg will be offered a seat on the Climate Change and Sustainability SPC on a pilot basis.

### **5. Audit Committee arrangements**

The Chief Executive confirmed that the three proposed external members of the Audit Committee, Gerry Leyden, Gerard Murphy and Irene McCausland had agreed to their membership. It was also confirmed that Gerry Leyden would be happy to take the role as Chair. This was welcomed by those present.

### **6. Dundalk Local Area Plan**

Thomas McEvoy briefed members on the preparation for the Dundalk Local Area Plan. In order to consider submissions made, it is to be proposed to the Council at the monthly meeting that a Special Meeting would be convened on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm in the Council Chamber, County Hall. The meeting may need to reconvene at the same time on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of November.

### **7. Members Allocations**

Noted

### **8. To Consider and Recommend Conferences and Events**

The list of conferences and events was:

**Proposed by:** Pío Smith  
**Seconded by:** Paula Butterly  
And Approved

## 9. Members Communication Plan

The meeting was briefed that a new CRM system is to be brought in. In discussion, Cllr. Pio Smith stated dissatisfaction with the existing system and in particular the lack of feedback and/or follow-up from staff. Cllr. Buttery stated that one Councillor has been raising an issue for months without ever receiving a reply and as a result of this, Councillors have no option but to approach staff 1-to-1 outside of the CRM.

The Chief Executive committed to taking the matter away and discussing it with the Management Team and senior staff.

## 10. Council Meeting Agenda

David Hanratty presented the agenda to the members which includes matters such as:

- Four section 183s
- SPC Scheme 2024 – 2029
- Proposed BIDS scheme for Drogheda 2025 - 2029
- Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 -2029
- Draft Special Speed Limit Bye Laws 2024
- Presentation by Drogheda Port Company

Cllr. James Byrne asked that his motion be removed from the Agenda and it was also noted that some motions on the draft agenda were very broad.

## 11. Any Other Business

The following were raised:

- The nominations for the Dundalk Civic Awards 2024 were noted
- A discussion was had regarding Lú festival funding beyond 2024
- Cllr. Pio Smith is seeking an update on the walls at Millmount
- There is a requirement for additional counselling space at Moneymore.

The Minutes were confirmed at a meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on:

Date:

6 Nov 2024.

Cathaoirleach:

Muiré Callan

Meeting Administrator:

[Signature]