



Comhairle 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 on
Wednesday, 7th February 2024 at 09:00am

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach, Cllr: Paula Butterly

Members, Cllrs: Joanna Byrne (Remote)
Seán Kelly
Pio Smith

Apologies, Cllrs: John Reilly
Liam Reilly

Officials: Joan Martin Chief Executive
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services
Ger Murphy, Director of Services
David Jones, Director of Services
Bernie Woods, Director of Services
Eamon Woulfe, A/Director of Services
Yvonne O'Brien, Director of Services
Gráinne Tuomey, Meetings Administrator

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd January 2024

Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 3rd January 2023 was:

Proposed by: Cllr Joanna Byrne
Seconded by: Cllr Paula Butterly
And agreed.

2. Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

3. Council Meeting Agenda

Members were given a briefing on all items in the Council Agenda including (but not exclusive to):

- The Annual Service Delivery Plan deferred from the January meeting. Several queries were received. The population divisor used in the KPIs was set Nationally by NOAC and cannot be changed.
- Two plans are before members; the Climate Action Plan which must be adopted by the 24th

February and the LECP. Short presentations will be given on both.

- Section 85 agreement between Louth and Meath to allow Louth to manage works to an extension of the Active Travel scheme into Southgate roundabout in Meath.
- Capital Programme Additions. A one page document listing additional works to the capital programme is before members, including retention of Millmount Wall, conservation of the handball alley at Millmount, and a pilot programme for 3 Community Gardens – 1 in each MD
- Approval to bring both Conferences and Community Grant lists as set out before them, to Council was proposed by Cllr Pio Smith, Seconded by Cllr Seán Kelly and agreed
- S141 responsibilities – Members were again reminded that the S141 report to council is an **annual** report on the activities of a body to which they are appointed and **not the minutes of the latest meeting**.
- Notices of Motion as submitted were discussed.

4. Members Communication Plan

Recent ongoing disorderly conduct and disruption of meetings by Members, and attitude towards staff, Cathaoirligh and individual Members was discussed, including the direct targeting and public belittling of the Meeting Administrator at the Dundalk MD meeting the previous night. Intertwined with that was a discussion on the non-adherence to Standing Orders including ignoring the instructions to move on, bypassing the process for submission of motions, and the requests for items to be recorded verbatim in the minutes rather than following the statutory requirements.

It was felt that there is little adherence to the Code of Conduct and the ongoing pressure on staff and questioning of integrity and legality of decisions of the Executive over the past year by both Members and Media seems to now be the norm, with Members openly stating they are holding the staff to account rather than trying to work collaboratively with them. The relentless pressure applied to influence Drogheda Members over an extended period by both Members and Media was also highlighted.

Members were referred to Section 13, Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, which sets out the process for dealing with disorderly conduct of Members during Meetings. It was felt that the Cathaoirligh need the backing of the Members on floor to assist with any actions.

The method of logging and responding to Councillors on Housing Maintenance calls was also discussed, with the difficulty in direct response to Housing Maintenance calls cited due to volume of issue that typically arise at this time of year, along with the age profile of units.

The migration of all staff to MS365 is almost complete, following which exploration of a new call management over 365 will commence.

5. SPC Annual Work Programmes 2023

Members were reminded that SPC Annual Work Programmes should be brought to CPG before Council. A plan was expected to be given in early January for the 2024 period up to Local Elections.

6. Any other business

Members were advised of a proposed Civic Reception by Dundalk Members.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date:

13 / 3 / 2024

Cathaoirleach:

Paula Butler

Meetings Administrator:

Aine Shanley