



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

Cruinniú Ceantar Buirge Dhroichead Átha - Borough District of Drogheda Meeting

Minutes of the Borough District of Drogheda Meeting held at Fair Street, Drogheda - Tuesday, 2nd September 2024 at 4:15pm

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: Mayor Cllr Paddy McQuillan

Members: Councillor(s) James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Eric Donovan, Michelle Hall, Ejiro O'Hare Stratton, Declan Power, Pio Smith,

Officials: Joan Martin, Chief Executive
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services
Ger Murphy, Director of Services
Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer
Declan Grimes, Senior Engineer
Bryan Coughlan, Meetings Administrator
Helen Hanratty, Diversity Officer

Minute No. 79/24

Motion to Suspend Standing Orders

Standing Orders were suspended on the proposal of Cllr. Paddy McQuillan and the seconding of Cllr. Kevin Callan in order to mark the retirement of Joan Martin, Chief Executive, who was in attendance. The members present paid tribute to the work of Ms. Martin and to the legacy she will leave behind in Drogheda, in particular the delivery of the Port Access Northern Cross Route, her work with the High-Lanes Gallery, the work on the Tholsel and the opening of the new Civic Offices in Drogheda.

Ms. Martin spoke of the important role that the public service has played in her life since her first posting at the age of 17 and how she hopes her legacy be that she instilled the importance of public service in the staff of the Council. She concluded by wishing Drogheda and its elected members continued success.

Minute No. 80/24

The minutes of the Annual meeting held on Monday 1st July 2024 were confirmed on the

Proposal of Cllr Kevin Callan
Seconded by Cllr Michelle Hall
And approved

Minute No. 81/24

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on Monday 1st July 2024 were confirmed on the

Proposal of Cllr Kevin Callan
Seconded by Cllr Pio Smith
And approved

Minute No. 82/24

The minutes of the special meeting held on 6th August 2024 were confirmed on the

Proposal of Cllr Pio Smith
Seconded by Cllr Joanna Byrne
And approved

Minute No. 83/24

Matters Arising

Cllr. Joanna Byrne referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2024, minute 22/24, and sought an update on the presentation to be given on dereliction and vacancy in Drogheda and also as to whether there had been any engagement on the vacant building on Windmill Road. In response to these matters Joe McGuinness advised that he hoped a presentation on vacancy and dereliction would be provided at the October monthly meeting and also that he would refer the matter of the property at Windmill Road to the Vacant Homes Officer.

Minute No. 84/24

Allocation of Members Community Grants provided for under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001

Members considered the Community Grants as presented to them, and approval was

Proposed by Cllr Paddy McQuillan
Seconded by Cllr Joanna Byrne
And agreed by Members

Minute No. 85/24

Date for Special Meeting in October to consider the Borough District of Drogheda District Budget

Special Meeting to be held at 9am on Monday 21st October.

Proposed by Cllr Paddy McQuillan
Seconded by Cllr Joanna Byrne
And approved

Minute No. 86/24

Part 8 – Rathmullen Park

The Chief Executive's report arising from the Part 8 public consultation process regarding the proposed development of six residential units in Rathmullen Park was presented by Ger Murphy and Declan Grimes.

The endeavor and work of the staff involved was welcomed by the elected members but the members also noted that there was significant opposition locally to certain elements of the development, notably the apartments.

The statutory timelines involved in the Part 8 process were re-affirmed by Joe McGuinness and Ger Murphy and the option of deferring the decision to the October meeting of the Borough District was discussed. Following further discussions by the members it was agreed that the matter would be deferred to the next meeting in order to allow the staff to examine options which would remove the apartments.

Proposed by Cllr Paddy McQuillan

Seconded by Cllr Joanna Byrne

And approved

Minute No. 87/24

Housing Progress Report

Members noted the report as circulated at the meeting.

Ger Murphy and Declan Grimes responded to a number of questions from the elected members present. The topics discussed included Family Hubs, Local Authority Home Loans, HAP Placefinder and an update on the Marsh Road development.

Minute No. 88/24

Roads and Local Services Report

Members noted the report as circulated at the meeting.

Mark Johnston attended the meeting and responded to a wide range of questions from the elected members. Matters discussed included weedkilling at Pitcher Hill Steps, plans for Featherbed Lane, fallen trees at Watery Hill Steps, requirement for road markings in a number of specific areas, the condition of the public toilets and playground in Clogherhead, and bus stop arrangements at the M1 Retail Park.

The following items were highlighted:

- It was agreed that a report would be brought to members on the ownership of Magdelene Towers.
- Consideration to be given to the erection of signs at Port Oriel to raise awareness of the dangers potentially caused by seals.
- Speed check to be undertaken Albion Rovers.
- Burris road drainage to be examined.
- Resurfacing of Mell Car Park to be undertaken this year.
- Municipal pitches remain a priority for Louth County Council and is included in the Capital Programme.
- Members noted the works conducted on the Tholsel.

Minute No. 89/24

Biodiversity Working Group and Reduced Mowing for Pollinators

Helen Hanratty presented to the meeting and provided an overview of the Biodiversity Working Group, including:

- How it relates to existing national and local policies
- Its work
- Its composition
- Meeting arrangements

The presentation also explained the concept of reduced mowing and what the associated benefits of it are.

Members were asked to nominate one person from the Borough District to join the Biodiversity Working Group. Cllr. Michelle Hall was proposed on her own nomination which was seconded by Cllr. Joanna Byrne.

Minute No. 90/24

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Kevin Callan

Seconded by: Cllr. Paddy McQuillan

Asking that the Elected Members of the Borough District of Drogheda seek through the Mayor to meet with the Cabinet Minister and Minister of State responsible for Local Government to start the process to advocate for the reinstatement of Drogheda Borough Council to its previous status as a local authority prior to the abolition of the Council with the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

That the Members begin this process to collectively call for the reinstatement of Drogheda Borough Council based on Drogheda's population increases and its historic status to allow for its future development and growth.

Reply from Joe McGuinness, Director of Services, Organisational Development

This is a matter for the members.

A number of members expressed support for this motion.

Minute No. 91/24

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Pio Smith

Seconded by: Cllr. Michelle Hall

Asking that the Local Authority impose a weight restriction on vehicles passing through Bothar Brugha, Drogheda.

Reply from David Jones, Director of Services, Place Making and Physical Development

After consideration and assessment, it has been determined that Bothar Brugha does not meet the criteria typically required for the implementation of a weight restriction.

Weight restrictions are generally imposed on roads that feature specific challenges, such as weak bridges, narrow widths, excessive gradients, or areas serving special interest destinations. It is noted that none of these conditions are present on Bothar Brugha.

Accordingly, the imposition of a weight restriction on this road is not recommended.

Cllr. Smith queried the rationale for Bothar Brugha not meeting the criteria for a weight restriction.

Minute No. 92/24

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Declan Power

Seconded by: Cllr. Paddy McQuillan

That Louth County Council install speed ramps or speed cushions on Chapel Road and a pedestrian crossing connecting Seantobair to John Kirk Estate in Clogherhead as part of the Road Works Programme in 2025.

Reply from David Jones, Director of Services Place Making and Physical Development

Gate way speed signage and high friction coloured road marking were installed on Chapel road in 2022 as a traffic calming measure prior to entering the built-up area of Clogherhead.

Further speed monitoring would need to be completed to analyse the effect of such signage/road markings in the intervening period and determine whether further measures are justified at this location, and consider as part of the 2025 Roads Programme, subject to available budgets and priorities.

Cllr. Power welcomed the suggestion of further speed monitoring and stressed the importance of action being taken.

Minute No. 93/24

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Declan Power

Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan

That Louth County Council install walking signs along the Boyne Camino Trail to raise awareness of groups walking in the area.

Reply from David Jones, Director of Services Place Making and Physical Development

The Council will consider erecting advance signage and/or markings to warn motorists of the presence of walkers/walking groups along the Boyne Camino Trail, subject to available budget. In respect of the section of the Trail along the N51, consultation will take place with Transport Infrastructure Ireland in the context of their operating remit on the National Road Network.

Minute No. 94/24

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Pio Smith

Seconded by: Cllr. Paddy McQuillan

Asking that the local authority carry out an economic analysis of Drogheda to include but not to be confined by the following metrics 1) population, 2) current employment levels, 3) skills and education qualifications of the available workforce, 4) number of commuters leaving the town each day etc. with a view to developing a plan to attract businesses and jobs to the town.

Reply from Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services, Strategic Economic Development

Please find data on employment and commuting in Drogheda (this includes Louth and Meath figures) from the Census in 2016 and 2022 together with live register figures received from the Department for Social Protection. Socio-Economic research has been commissioned to be carried out in October to profile both Drogheda and Dundalk for investment purposes and this information will be made available when the report is finalised.

Minute No. 95/24

Any Other Business

- Cllr. McQuillan raised the issue of a €6,000 shortfall for the Sean Corcoran Series Festival and **formally proposed** that €6,000 would be provided from the Long Term Car Park Fund. This was **seconded** by Cllr. Hall.
Joe McGuinness suggested that the Members should consider how this money would be best spent going forward with which those in attendance agreed.
- Cllr. Declan Power reminded Members that the National Service Day was happening on Sunday 14th September. A parade would commence at 12pm and all Councillors would be invited.

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

Date:

7/10/24

Mayor:

[Signature]

Meeting Administrator:

[Signature]