

Borough District of Drogheda - February 2022

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough District of Drogheda held in The Barbican Centre, Drogheda, on Monday 7th February 2022 at 4.15 p.m.

In attendance: *(All attendance was in person)*

Mayor: Cllr. James Byrne

Members: Councillors Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Tom Cunningham, Michelle Hall, Fiachra MacRaghnaill, Paddy McQuillan, Declan Power, Pio Smith, Eileen Tully

Officials: Gráinne Tuomey, Meetings Administrator
Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services
Willie Walsh, Senior Executive Officer
Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer

Minute No. 10/22

Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on Monday 10th January 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. Kevin Callan and seconded by Cllr. Pio Smith.

Minute No. 11/22

Housing Progress Report

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting. Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services addressed all matters raised by the Members.

Highlighted issues included:

- With COVID restrictions lifted, a reduced capacity of units is available for emergency accommodation which had been provided as a COVID19 measure. Homeless persons are gradually been provided with placements under HAP.
- Housing for All figures will be provided in the next report to Councillors.
- A decrease in HAP inspections was noted. Difficulty in recruiting and retaining technicians who can obtain higher income on the private market was advised.
- There is a provision for landlords to inspect long term leased units. Any concerns around individual property inspections should be advised to the Housing Team.
- More units are planned to be energy retrofitted in 2022. Await funding details.

The following non-housing issues were raised:

- Information on vacant/derelict properties, the differences between both, the legislation, the definition and the responsibility of the council in relation to same was requested. It was thought there was possibly unfair criticism of the council on properties in Drogheda. Members were advised this falls under Planning.
- Details of any Drogheda Historic Town Regeneration application was requested.
- Following launch of the Town Centre Plan by the Department, a Town Centre Health Check of Drogheda was requested - this was supported by several Members.

Minute No. 12/22

Operations and Marine Progress Report

Members discussed the report as circulated at the meeting. Mark Johnson, Senior Engineer addressed all Operations Matters raised.

Along with requests for potholes/footpaths/yellow box upgrades and repairs, traffic calming measures, traffic and pedestrian light sequencing issues, gully and drain unblocking at various locations which were all noted by Mark Johnson, the following items were highlighted:

- Dog owners can dispose of dog waste in ordinary bins. Separate dog bins are not required to be provided.
- Following the erection of '3 mobile' mast in town, operations were unaware of any plans for further mobile masts in the town, or of any further S.254 applications for same.
- External contractors carrying out patch works (e.g. at Pearse Park), may be installing temporary fix in the first instance as they often follow with a permanent fix when all works complete. Pearse Park works would be checked.
- Roads must be at least 5m wide to allow for road markings.
- Letter will issue from operations to property owners of dangerous structures on roadside - broken tree overhanging footpath at Tullyallen
- Graveyard at Clogherhead - would be checked to see if vested in Louth County Council and if so consideration will be given to works.
- Road works programme budget is allocated on a pro-rata basis on length of roads per county.
- Historic Fix Your Street open calls would be checked and closed off where possible.

The following non-operations issues were raised:

- An update on the Fair Street project and a timeframe for completion of works, including details of Chamber provision was requested. Members were advised that tenders were being assessed.
- A query on whether there was an Environmental Impact Assessment or a Wildlife Assessment carried out on St. Dominic's bridge works, as there were reportedly otters living under the bridge, should be referred to Infrastructure.
- Update on any lighting plans of St. Dominic's bridge to be referred to Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer.
- A request was made for the council to write to RSA to see how much longer they intend to be in their existing location as it is causing traffic congestion. A letter from residents was not responded to. Members were advised the RSA Driving Centre location was a matter for the Department of Transport.
- A request for a walk/cycle lane from Newtown Cemetery back into town should be referred to Infrastructure/Gráinne O'Brien, Senior Executive Engineer who is the lead on Active Travel.
- Caravan/Mobile parks are a matter for Planning.

Minute No. 13/22

Litter and Bring Back Reports

Members received a report on Litter Management and Bring Bank provision and usage from Willie Walsh, Senior Executive Officer which was well received.

The following matters were highlighted.

- Lower bottle bank usage in September noted, cause unknown.
- Litter Wardens will be asked to remind business owners on the south side of the river of their responsibility to clean within 100m of their premises.
- The joint National Spring Clean Campaign with Meath County Council will be brought back to Community section for update.
- Difficulty in tackling Dog Fouling and enforcing legislation was discussed.

Minute No. 14/22

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. Pio Smith

Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan

“Asking that the local authority provide an update on the discussions with consultants regarding the possible Drogheda Visitor Experience Project.”

Reply from Mr. F. Pentony, Director of Services, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development:

The concepts for a potential Visitor Attraction are currently being finalised by the consultants, which is financed by Fáilte Ireland.

Speaking on this Motion, Cllr. Pio Smith said having a Visitor Attraction was very important and he would have liked a more comprehensive reply to his motions. He would like to see a more detailed presentation which included details of ideas to attract more people from around the EU to come and stay, a time frame and next steps involved. He advised that having successfully hosted two Fleadh Ceoil in Drogheda, Fáilte Ireland had been shown what could be done in Drogheda.

Members supported Cllr Smith in this motion and in the need for a more comprehensive response.

Minute No. 15/22

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. James Byrne

Seconded by: Cllr. Michelle Hall

"That Louth County Council improves the visual aspect of St Mary's bridge by scraping off the moss and lichen before giving it a fresh coat of paint, ahead of installing the hanging baskets this summer."

Reply from Ms. C. Duff, Director of Services, Operations:

Engineers have assessed east and west steel railings which were painted black in the past but are now faded in places especially at the top and bottom rail. Railings need to be power washed/sand blasted and repainted this will be costed and will be considered for 2022 program subject to funding availability.

Comparing the bridge to the Hay Market building and the Bridge of Peace and how well they look the Mayor suggest that some TLC was required before flowers were put in.

Minute No. 16/22

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. James Byrne

Seconded by: Cllr. Pio Smith

"That Louth County Council brings forward further practical measures, subject to public consultation, to alleviate the speed and volume of traffic through the Mount St Oliver/Congress Avenue/Priest Lane area"

Reply from Ms. C. Duff, Director of Services, Operations:

Two new speed ramps were introduced on Priest Lane in late 2021 and these will have the impact of modifying driver behaviour in this area. There is congestion throughout the town of Drogheda particularly at peak times. It raises the need to address sustainable modes of transport. Climate change and future active travel projects and the improvements in public transport which will give more options as these projects are delivered.

Several Members spoke in support of this motion, advising that the area is used as a shortcut with speeding issues occurring. It was suggested that a possible one way system was previously discussed and should be considered along with any other low cost safety measures to slow traffic down. Resident involvement in finding solutions was highlighted as a requirement of any measures.

Minute No. 17/22

Notice of Question

Submitted by: Cllr James Byrne

"Will Louth County Council carry out a traffic survey on the Newfoundwell Road given the prevalence of speeding in the vicinity of the railway bridge?"

Reply from Ms. C. Duff, Director of Services, Operations:

Louth County Council Engineers will access the location and review the accident statistics before a determination is made that a speed survey will proceed. Priority is being given to locations where there is an accident history in order to prioritise resources to where there will be most impact from a road safety perspective.

Minute No. 18/22

Correspondence

Members noted the correspondence from Minister Stephen Donnelly and Minister Roderic O'Gorman.

Minute No. 19/22

AOB

Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services advised Members that Alan Sherry, former Meeting Administrator was leaving Louth County Council to take up a new post with Dublin City Council. Members spoke well of Alan and wished him well in his new job.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded.

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

Date:

7 March 2022

Mayor:

[Signature]

Meeting Administrator:

[Signature]

