

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Louth County Council held in County Hall, Dundalk on Monday 18th January 2016

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. P. Savage

Members: Councillors: D. Breathnach M. Butler, T. Byrne, K. Callan, A. Cassidy, E. Corrigan, T. Cunningham, M. Dearey, M. Doyle, K. Flood, F. Godfrey, J. Green, C. Keelan, J. Loughran, C. Markey, J. McGahon, P. McGeough, K. Meenan, D. Minogue, I. Munster, L. Reilly, T. Sharkey, P. Smith, J. Tenanty, O. Tully, M. Yore

Officials: J. Martin, Chief Executive
B. Woods, Head of Finance
J. McGuinness Director of Services
F. Pentony, Director of Services
E. O’Gorman, Director of Services
P. Finn, Senior Engineer
D. Storey, Senior Executive Officer
T. McEvoy, Head of LEO
M. Murtagh, Meetings Administrator

Apologies: Cllr. R. Culhane

Minute No. 01/16

Confirmation of Minutes

Proposed by: Cllr. K. Callan
Seconded by: Cllr. F. Godfrey
And resolved:

That the minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 21st December 2015 be confirmed.

Minute No. 02/16

Matters Arising

- Minute 317/15 – amended to reflect that Cllr. K. Callan was in attendance and voted – Cllr. A. Cassidy was absent
- Minute 323/15 – amended to clarify that the motion was agreed
- Minute 324/15 – amended to clarify that the motion was agreed
- Noted that letters had issued to An Bord Pleanala in accordance with Minute 313/15 which was acknowledged on 6th January 2016
- F. Pentony, Director of Services updated members on Colaiste Cuchulainn confirming that there had been no objections to the CPO and that the Department of Education had been notified accordingly. The Department is now proceeding to tender document stage
- Confirmed that the Water Safety Development Officer had contacted Wexford and Donegal County Councils in relation to the Hippocampe All Terrain Beach Wheelchairs and prepared Draft Report in the matter. Further discussion to take place to clarify a number of issues
- Minute 328/15 – The Chief Executive confirmed that a meeting has been arranged between officials from Louth and Monaghan County Councils

Minute No. 03/16

Minutes for noting

The following minutes were noted by the members.

Borough District of Drogheda 7th December 2015
Corporate Policy Group 11th December 2015
Economic Development & Enterprise Support SPC 14th September 2015
JPC & LPC Ardee dated 14th February 2014 and 22nd October 2015
JPC & LPC Drogheda dated 17th February 2014 and 19th October 2015
JPC & LPC Dundalk dated 18th February 2014 and 20th October 2015
Municipal District of Ardee 3rd December 2015
Municipal District of Dundalk 2nd December 2015
Planning & Environment SPC 9th September 2015

Minute No. 04/16

Chairman's Report – Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on 8th January 2016

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P. Savage presented the report. The Draft Agenda for the January meeting was considered and agreed and recommendation made in relation to Conferences and Events. It was confirmed that a review of Customer Services is to take place and members would be invited to contribute to the process. Agreed to ask the Louth Agricultural Committee to provide details of their proposed presentation and defer decision until next meeting. Members were advised about the launch of the Louth Programme of Centenary celebrations on 26th January.

Minute No. 05/16

Monthly Management Report

Members considered the Management Report dated 7th January 2016
Queries in regard to the report were addressed by the Chief Executive, Members of the Management Team, and Senior Staff. Issues addressed included:-

- Property in Drogheda allocated under Choice Based Letting scheme outside of the advertising process. The Director of Services clarified the position in relation to the allocation of the property. Noted that 20 offers have been made to date under the scheme with only one refusal which is an indication that the scheme is working
- The issue of the refusal of a Notice of Motion onto the Agenda of the Borough District of Drogheda was raised. Members were advised that staffing was a matter solely for the Chief Executive and the motion was refused on that basis. Members expressed the view that a policy proposal was interpreted as a staffing matter and that the matter should be discussed regardless of the outcome
- Request made for updated staff listing
- Members requested an update on the filling of vacant Dundalk Town Centre Manager post. Noted that this was a matter for BIDS which is a private company with representation from Louth County Council at both executive and elected level

- Members requested an update on the current Traveller Accommodation situation and expressed disappointment that they had not been kept informed in the matter. Copies of the two press statements issued by Louth County Council together with a copy of the Agreement reached on Friday 15th January were circulated to members at the meeting. The Health & Safety issues associated with the site were stressed.
- Members raised the issue of misinterpretation of Guidelines leading to some tenants having huge arrears through no fault of their own. Members were advised that two separate sets of legal advice as well as an Ombudsman Report upheld the duty of the Local Authority to collect the arrears. Members requested that they be circulated with copies of this advice
- Confirmed that loans of €60m. apply in respect of lands purchased by the local authority. The lands at Dunleer are part of a package being advertised by NAMA as part of at PPP with a possibility of land at Drogheda also being included

Minute No. 06/16

Votes of Sympathy

Votes of sympathy were recorded in respect of the following.

- Mary Capplis, Infrastructure Section on the death of her mother Mrs. Noreen Capplis
- Family of the late Paddy O' Neill
- Family of the late Eileen Kenna
- Jim Mackin, Mid-Louth area on the death of his mother Mrs. Kathleen Mackin
- The family of Patricia Copas, Drogheda

Minute No. 07/16

Conference and Events

Proposed by Cllr. L. Reilly
Seconded by Cllr. J. Tenanty
And resolved:

To approve the attendance of members recorded in the Conference and Events register at such conference and events listed with the agenda

Minute No. 08/16

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. O. Tully

Seconded by Cllr. C. Markey

"That Louth County Council make a submission to the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government and the Road Safety Authority requesting them to make it compulsory for people to wear protective helmets while cycling, especially children".

During a lengthy discussion in the matter members expressed support for the spirit of the motion but had difficulty with the compulsory element indicating that their preference would be for an education/awareness campaign that would include the wearing of helmets as part of the safe cycling campaign. Noted that under the National Cycling Strategy, Local Authorities have a duty to appoint Cycling Advocate Officials who in turn have a duty to set-up a cycling forum and that this could be the best option to develop the desired Education / Awareness Campaign. As the proposer of this motion, Cllr. O. Tully was happy with this suggestion and the fact the discussion highlighted the need for a safe cycling programme. It was resolved, therefore, to establish a committee / forum to develop and implement an education and awareness programme aimed at safe cycling.

Minute No. 09/16

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. P. Smith

Seconded by Cllr. I. Munster

"Calling on Louth County Council to take in charge the road and traffic light system leading to St. Joseph's National School in Mell, Drogheda"

Reply:

Louth County have received approval for Phase 2 & 3 Boice Court Housing Scheme. As part of the development of this scheme the council will consider the taking in charge of the traffic light system.

Following discussion in the matter Mr. P. Finn, Senior Engineer advised that declaring the road to be a public road is premature until the housing development is progressed. It was agreed, however, that the issue of maintaining the road would be further addressed.

Minute No. 10/16

Notice of Motion

**Proposed by Cllr. P. McGeough
Seconded by Cllr. L. Reilly**

"I wish to call on this Council to carry out a comprehensive report into the flooding that occurs on an ongoing basis in Dromiskin with a view of finding solutions for residents who have been badly affected by recent floods "

Reply:

This matter will be investigated in order to ascertain the scale of works involved and if the resources are available within the Operations section to carry out the study and any works identified. Dromiskin does not come within the remit of the CFRAM study, so funding for any works may be an issue.

The response was noted with disappointment expressed that Dromiskin was not included in the CFRAM Study

Minute No. 11/16

Notice of Motion

**Proposed by Cllr. T. Sharkey
Seconded by Cllr. E. Corrigan
And resolved**

"That Louth County Council corresponds with the National Ambulance Service, HSE and Department of Health relating the public's concerns about the resources and ability to respond to the needs of the public in Louth."

Cllr Sharkey requested that the correspondence should issue immediately in advance of the proposed visit of Mr Leo Vardakas TD, Minister for Health to the Louth County Hospital on Wednesday 20th January.

Minute No. 12/16

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. T. Sharkey

Seconded by Cllr. A. Cassidy

That Louth County Council management publishes an analysis of the issues related through the customer services section, detailing the nature and chronology of issues related by staff, members and the public. This analysis will serve as a tool for staff and members to inform decision making around resources and operations."

Reply:

This matter will be examined and a report issued in due course

During discussion members advised that the motion was not necessarily a criticism of the system but it was suggested that while the initial logging of the issues was efficient, delays were encountered in follow-up action and response. Ms. E. O’Gorman, Director of Services advised that the review was timely and asked that members email her directly with comments/suggestions which would feed into the review. It was agreed that the review would comprise of

- 1) An analysis of how the system is working generally***
- 2) An examination of the capability of the system***
- 3) Examine if there is any scope in the Review to ascertain satisfaction levels with “Fix my Street” system***

It was further agreed, on the proposal of Cllr. C. Markey, seconded by Cllr. L. Reilly that consideration should be given to having Customer Service as a regular agenda item for Monthly Meetings

Minute No. 13/16

Correspondence

Members noted correspondence circulated with the Agenda including Circular F1/16 in the matter of Reporting of Political Donations by elected members

Minute No. 14/16

Chief Executives Order Register

The Register was available for inspection.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

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

Date: _____

Cathaoirleach: _____

Meetings Administrator: _____