

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in Council Chamber and held remotely over MS teams on 21st June 2021 directly after the Annual General Meeting at 10a.m.

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Pio Smith (present in Chamber)

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, Paula Butterly, James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Edel Corrigan, Tom Cunningham, Maria Doyle, Michelle Hall, Conor Keelan, Seán Kelly, Fiachra MacRaghnaill, Pearse McGeough, Andrea McKevitt, Paddy McQuillan, Kevin Meenan, Dolores Minogue, Declan Power, John Reilly, Liam Reilly, Tomás Sharkey, John Sheridan, Jim Tenanty, Eileen Tully, Antoin Watters, Maeve Yore

All Councillors attended remotely

Apologies: Cllrs. Emma Coffey, Hugh Conlon

Officials: J. Martin, Chief Executive – (present in Council Chamber)
J. McGuinness, Director of Services – (present in Council Chamber)
G. Tuomey, Meetings Administrator – (present in Council Chamber)
P. Donnelly, Director of Services – (present in Chamber)
C. Duff, Director of Services – (attended remotely)
B. Woods, Head of Finance – (present in Chamber)
F. Pentony, Director of Services – (attended remotely)
J. Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer (attended remotely)
E. Eaton, Staff Officer, Corp. Services (present in Council Chamber)

Minute No. 108/21

Confirmation of Minutes

Proposed by: Cllr. L. Reilly

Seconded by: Cllr. A. McKevitt

And resolved:

That the minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 17th May 2021 be confirmed.

Minute No. 109/21

Matters Arising

Minute 89/21 – Outdoor Dining – A request that permissions include a clause on accessibility

Updates were requested on dog licencing and chipping

A request was made to write to Paul Reid advising of refusal of CH08 to meet council.

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

Minute No. 110/21

District Meetings Minutes for noting

Minutes of the District meetings listed below were noted by the members.

Borough District of Drogheda 10th May 2021

Municipal District of Dundalk 4th May 2021

Municipal District of Ardee 6th May 2021

Minute No. 111/21

Committee Meetings Minutes for noting

Minutes of the Committee meetings listed below were noted by the members.

Corporate Policy Group 6th May 2021

Newry Mourne Down & LCC Strategic Alliance 24th February 2021

Minute No. 112/21

Tuarascáil ó Chathaoirleach an Ghrúpa Beatais Corpaideach / Report from Chairperson of Corporate Policy Group

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that the meeting of the CPG was held in the Council chamber, at 9.00 am on Wednesday 9th June 2021 by zoom. Members agreed to put the Fleadh Ceoil on the Agenda, and were advised on changes to Local Property Tax and the reporting time on same. Members received an update on progress on the County Development Plan and that the minutes were being worked through. Members received a review of the Mother and Baby homes report as it was agreed to refer this to whips to determine the next course of action on this report. Members were reminded re using the Sugar system to log calls and a motion on formation of an agriculture committee was being examined by Director Joe McGuinness as to its function relating to Council business.

Minute No. 113/21

Tuarascail o Chathaoirligh an Choiste an Beartaqs Straiteiseach / Strategic Policy Committee Chairperson's Report

Housing SPC

Cllr Joanna Byrne advised Members that the Housing SPC met on Tuesday 8th June. The SPC received a presentation on the Homeless Strategy for the North East Region, a draft of which is to be presented at the July meeting of Council. Cllr Byrne complimented the strategy's capture of incidents of homelessness caused by Domestic Violence which had not been done before.

The SPC also received an update on the Disability Strategy and a report on the Draft Policy on Control of Dogs. Members were advised that it is proposed to ban council tenants from keeping dangerous dogs under the policy. The next meeting is set for September.

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

Economic Development & Enterprise Support SPC

Cllr Pio Smith advised Members that the SPC met on Tuesday 1st June. The SPC received a presentation on Peace Plus which sets out Cross Border Development and builds on previous Peace projects.

There is €39million available under this initiative

Minute No. 114/21

Breithniú ar Thuarascálacha agus ar Chomhréitigh ón bPríomhfheidhmeannach / Consideration of Reports and Recommendations from Chief Executive

- Monthly Management Report
- Finance & Water Services
- Economic Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
- Operations & Waste Management
- Corporate & Emergency Services
- Housing & Quality of Life

The Cathaoirleach requested that Members hear item 12 of the agenda on Local Property Tax under the item on Finance & Water Services which was done. Members noted all reports, and relevant Directors responded to queries raised.

The following items were noted:

- Issues with water quality or pressure should be logged directly to Irish Water in the first instance.
- Local Property Tax to be brought to the July meeting as proposed by Cllr Liam Reilly and seconded by Cllr Paula Butterly.
- Report on Short Term Lettings to be circulated to Members.
- Consideration will be given to ongoing maintenance of Annagassan Harbour, funding dependant.
- A campaign on Dog licencing and chipping will be considered for September.
- PANCR, officials meeting with the Dept on Friday, and looking at other funding options also.
- Interested parties in sponsoring town roundabouts will be approached.

Minute No. 115/21

Arts Grants 2021

In accordance with Section 12 of the Arts Act 2003 members noted the grants report as issued and welcomed the appointment of new Arts Officer Moya Hodgers.

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

Minute No. 116/21

Nomination to LCDC – Drogheda Chamber of Commerce

Ratification of the nomination of Stephen Rice to the LCDC by Drogheda Chamber of Commerce to replace outgoing member Breannán Casey was proposed by Cllr. Maeve Yore and seconded by Cllr. Eileen Tully.

Minute No. 117/21

Approval to borrow €5.7 million from HFA to fund the Public Lighting Programme

Director of Services Frank Pentony briefed Members on this programme, and approval to seek loan funding was proposed by Cllr Marianne Butler and seconded by Cllr Maeve Yore

Minute No. 118/21

Annual Report 2020 for Adoption

Members praised the quality of the report. It was suggested that the reference on councillors who left during 2020 be changed to 'ceased to be a member' from 'resigned'. Adoption of the Annual Report was proposed by Cllr Marianne Butler, and seconded by Cllr Liam Reilly.

Minute No. 119/21

Amenity Grants – for Adoption

Proposed by: Cllr Michelle Hall
Seconded by: Cllr Marianne Butler

To adopt the Amenity Grants as circulated with the agenda in accordance with Section 66 (1) of the Local Government Act 2001

Minute No. 120/21

Local Property Tax Arrangements

This item was dealt with under the Chief Executives Management Report

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

Minute No. 121/21

Fleadh Ceoil 2018/19

Following the discussion of the previous month meeting, the Chief Executive Joan Martin again spoke on the success of the Fleadh Ceoil in securing Drogheda as a Tourist Destination, and on promoting tourism in Louth. Members were advised that the numbers attending hugely exceeded expectations with the number of visitors reaching 700,000 in year two, and this generated up to €50m for the local economy and put Louth on the map as a place to go. However the increased footfall came with an increased cost for security, event management, cleaning etc and a bigger festival means a bigger cost which led to there being a deficit of €1.5m on Louth County Councils books. The CE suggested that this debt be written off over a 10 year period.

Cllr Hall noted that this was the most successful Fleadh ever held, and showed Drogheda and Louth had tourism potential at a time when Drogheda was in the middle of a drug feud, and proposed to accept the Chief Executive suggestion and write off the debt over a 10 year period.

This was seconded by Cllr Liam Reilly.

Many Members expressed disagreement with this and a lengthy discussion followed with many Members speaking both for and against writing off the debt.

Having allowed all members to speak, the Cathaoirleach noted that it took 10 years of planning to get the Fleadh to Drogheda, and that it had branded Drogheda as a town to go to, and agreed that this had been done at a time when Drogheda was struggling. Cllr Smith opinioned that it would be difficult to know the full costs of such an event in advance and suggested that if Louth County Council had not provided cash flow for the Fleadh there would have been uproar, and asked the Chief Executive to respond to Members before going to a vote.

The Chief Executive advised that she had always been honest in her reporting of the financial situation at any point in time, and couldn't see any other way to fund this debt.

A roll call vote was held 'on the proposal to write off €1.5m debt over 10 years' as follows:

	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
BUTLER, Marianne		1		
BUTTERLY, Paula		1		
BYRNE, James	1			
BYRNE, Joanna		1		
CALLAN, Kevin				1
COFFEY, Emma				1
CONLON, Hugh				1
CORRIGAN, Edel		1		
CUNNINGHAM, Tom		1		
DOYLE, Maria		1		
HALL, Michelle	1			
KEELAN, Conor		1		

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

KELLY, Sean				1
MacRAGHNAILL, Fiachra	1			
McGEOUGH, Pearse		1		
McKEVITT, Andrea		1		
McQUILLAN, Paddy				1
MEENAN, Kevin		1		
MINOGUE, Dolores	1			
POWER, Declan	1			
REILLY, John		1		
REILLY, Liam	1			
SHARKEY, Tomás		1		
SHERIDAN, John	1			
SMITH, Pío	1			
TENANTY, Jim				1
TULLY, Eileen	1			
WATTERS, Antoin		1		
YORE, Maeve		1		
	9	14	0	6

And the proposal was rejected

Minute No. 122/21

Allocations of Members Community Grants

Members Community Grant Allocations as circulated with the agenda were approved by the members

Minute No. 123/21

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. Emma Coffey

That Louth County Council give their support in the DKIT s.38 TU ACT application in obtaining University Status and ensuring that it becomes the 1st choice third level learning institution in the North East

Cllr. Emma Coffey – absent so moved forward to July meeting

Minute No. 124/21

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. John Sheridan

Seconded by Cllr. Marianne Butler

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

"That Louth County Council writes to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to lobby to that under 'A waste action plan for a circular economy' the Department prioritise the current commitment (page 56) on introducing EPR (Extended producer responsibility) on bulky household items including mattresses and couches. The WEEE initiative introduced a scheme of free recycling for old electrical goods via retailers. It has successfully mitigated discarding of electrical goods illegally and a state sponsored EPR scheme for mattresses and couches should create a similar outcome. "

Cllr Sheridan speaking on his motion noted that he had since become familiar with the Circular Economy Plan which extended Producer Responsibility.

Cllr Watters welcoming Cllr Sheridan's motion proposed an amendment that tyres be added to the list after mattresses and couches. Officials advised that there is legislation around waste tyres but Cllr Watters thought due to the volume of illegal dumping of tyres it should be added anyway.

Cllr Sheridan supported this amendment and a roll call vote was held as follows:

	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
BUTLER, Marianne	1			
BUTTERLY, Paula	1			
BYRNE, James	1			
BYRNE, Joanna	1			
CALLAN, Kevin				1
COFFEY, Emma				1
CONLON, Hugh				1
CORRIGAN, Edel	1			
CUNNINGHAM, Tom				1
DOYLE, Maria				1
HALL, Michelle	1			
KEELAN, Conor				1
KELLY, Sean				1
MacRAGHNAILL, Fiachra		1		
McGEOUGH, Pearse	1			
McKEVITT, Andrea	1			
McQUILLAN, Paddy				1
MEENAN, Kevin	1			
MINOGUE, Dolores	1			
POWER, Declan	1			
REILLY, John	1			
REILLY, Liam				1
SHARKEY, Tomás				1
SHERIDAN, John	1			
SMITH, Pio	1			
TENANTY, Jim				1
TULLY, Eileen	1			
WATTERS, Antoin	1			

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

YORE, Maeve	1			
	17	1	0	11

And the amended motion was agreed.

Minute No. 125/21

Notice of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. Maeve Yore

Seconded by Cllr. Marianne Butler

And resolved

“That Louth County Council consider and organise an appropriate memorial item to acknowledge, remember and commemorate all the Citizens of Louth who passed during the Covid-19 Pandemic & Lockdown when restrictions have lifted and it is safe to do so”

Reply:

A commemorative event will be considered after all restrictions have been lifted.

Cllr Yore welcomed suggestions. Cllrs suggested that perhaps this could be done by each MDs as Ardee have arranged their own

Minute No. 126/21

Question: Cllr. Pio Smith

“To ask the Local Authority to provide a list of all funding applications made by the Local Authority in 2020”

This item is to be deferred to July to allow time to collate the responses

Minute No. 127/21

Question: Cllr. Marianne Butler

In relation to the short term letting regulations (SI No.235 of 2019 Planning and Development Act 2000 (Exempted Development) (No.2) Regulations 2019, a total of 45 warning letters were issued in 2020 by Louth County Council. Can the Chief Executive outline subsequent action taken in these cases (i.e. enforcement notice, referred for legal proceedings, injunctions, prosecutions etc)

Reply from Mr. F. Pentony Director of Services Planning

Of the 45 warning letters as queried below 36 of these were in fact complaints received that were recorded incorrectly on the Q2 2020 return.

The remaining 9 break down as follows:

- 5 have gone to medium / long term lease
- 1 has lodged a planning application
- 2 have removed advertising and cancelled bookings
- 1 no long being advertised.

Minutes of Council Meeting June 2021

The remaining 36 are under investigation and may result in Warning letters in due course.

Response was noted by the members

Minute No. 128/21

Correspondence

Correspondence as listed with the Agenda was noted by the members

Minute No. 129/21

Votes of Sympathy

Members expressed sympathy to the family and friends of:

Paddy Dullaghan RIP Husband of Fionnuala, 20 Farndreg Dlk - Father, Grandfather, Brother served in Louth Civil Defence, 27th Battalion Army, Military Police

And his twin brother Jim Dullaghan RIP brother of Donal 84 Pearse Park Dlk Uncle, Brother in Law served in above with brother Paddy and passed away within 1 day of each other on 7 May.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

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

Date: _____

Cathaoirleach: _____

Meetings Administrator: _____