



Comhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

## **Louth County Council Monthly Meeting**

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Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber of Co. Hall, Dundalk on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, at 10:00a.m.

### **In Attendance:**

Presiding: Councillor, Conor Keelan - Cathaoirleach

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, Paula Butterly, James Byrne, Joanna Byrne, Kevin Callan, Bernie Conlon, Edel Corrigan, Tom Cunningham, Maria Doyle, Michelle Hall, Seán Kelly, Fiachra Mac Raghnaill, Andrea McKevitt,, Pearse McGeough, Kevin Meenan, Dolores Minogue, Declan Power, John Reilly, Liam Reilly, Tomás Sharkey, John Sheridan, Pío Smith, Eileen Tully, Antóin Watters, Maeve Yore.

Apologies: Councillors: Emma Coffey, Paddy McQuillan, Jim Tenanty.

Officials: Joan Martin, Chief Executive  
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services  
Gráinne Tuomey, Meeting Administrator  
Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services  
Bernie Woods, Director of Services  
Catherine Duff, Director of Services  
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services  
John O'Hagan, Senior Engineer  
Joanna Kelly, Senior Planner

### **Minute No. 1/23**

#### **Minutes from meeting held on 19th December 2022**

Proposed by: Cllr John Sheridan

Seconded by: Cllr Michelle Hall

### **Minute No. 2/23**

#### **Minutes of District Meetings – Noted**

- Borough District of Drogheda 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022
- Municipal District of Dundalk 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022

## Minute No. 3/23

### Minutes of Committee Meetings – Noted

- Corporate Policy Group Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022

## Minute No. 4/23

### Report from Chairperson of Corporate Policy Group

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Conor Keelan advised Members that the January CPG meeting was held in person at 9.00 am on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January in the Setanta Room, County Hall.

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

- Requirement to adopt the Service Delivery Plan for 2023 in accordance with S50 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended
- Vacancy on the Eastern Border Region following the resignation of Cllr Butterly. As Cllr Butterly was one of the 6 Louth County Council Members on the forum but also one of the 3 of the 6 Louth County Council forum Members on the board, two nominations were required
- A presentation will be given on the Flexibus service
- Approval was given to bring conferences and grants to Council

Other items were discussed including:

- SPC work programme updates to be given at February meeting by Chairs
- Cessation of the Tracker system and reliance on the SUGAR system which it is hoped to enhance
- Tourism of area
- Ongoing works by Senior Management on suitable memorial for the late Liam Reilly

### Suspension of Standing Orders to receive an Emergency Motion under Standing Order 18

**Cllr Michelle Hall proposed** to suspend standing orders to hear an emergency motion later in the meeting. This was **seconded by Cllr Tomás Sharkey** and as half of Members were required to agree to an Emergency motion, the Cathaoirleach requested that a vote be taken by raising hands. All Members present at time unanimously agreed to hear the emergency motion following statutory business.

**Minute No. 5/23**

**Approval of Attendance at Conferences**

**Proposed by :** Cllr John Sheridan  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Paula Butterly  
**And resolved**

**Minute No. 6/23**

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

**Proposed by :** Cllr Marianne Butler  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Antóin Watters  
**And resolved**

**Minute No. 7/23**

**Adoption of the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2023 under Section 50 of the Local Government (Reform) Act, 2014**

Following queries raised by Councillors on various items within the Annual Service Delivery Plan and responses issued from the Executive, **adoption of the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2023** was

**Proposed by:** Cllr Michelle Hall  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Liam Reilly  
**And agreed by Members.**

**Minute No. 8/23**

**Vacancy on East Border Region arising from resignation of Cllr. Paula Butterly from the Committee**

The following persons were precluded from nominating a replacement for Cllr Butterly as they had formed a group to nominate one of the 6 Louth committee members in the 2019 Annual Meeting: Cllrs Joanna Byrne, R. Ó Murchú (replaced by K. Meenan), A. Watters, T. Sharkey, E. Corrigan & P. McGeough.

**Cllr John Reilly** was nominated to replace Cllr Paula Butterly on the East Border Region Committee, as

**Proposed by:** Cllr Andrea McKeivitt  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Seán Kelly

And as there were no objections or other nominees put forward, it was so agreed.

**Minute No. 9/23**

**Vacancy on East Border Region Committee Board arising from resignation of Cllr. Paula Butterly from the Committee**

Members were advised that three out of the six Louth County Council committee members also served as East Region Border (ERB) Board Members. As Cllr Butterly had served on the board, Members were also required to nominate her replacement from remaining Committee Members. Cllrs Kelly and Hall being existing Board Members could not be nominated again. The remaining committee members Cllrs Keelan, McGeough McKevitt and newly appointed John Reilly therefore were eligible for nomination. All Louth County Council Elected Members were allowed to vote on board nominations.

**Cllr Pearse McGeough was nominated as a board member:**

**Proposed by** Cllr Kevin Meenan  
**Seconded by** Cllr Tom Cunningham

**Cllr John Reilly was nominated as a board member:**

**Proposed by** Cllr Seán Kelly  
**Seconded by** Cllr Andrea McKevitt

**As there was more than one nominee a roll call vote was held as follows:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Nominee Pearse McGeough</b>	<b>Nominee John Reilly</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Marianne Butler		1		
Paula Butterly		1		
James Byrne		1		
Joanna Byrne				1
Kevin Callan		1		
Emma Coffey				1
Bernie Conlon			1	
Edel Corrigan				1
Tom Cunningham	1			
Maria Doyle		1		
Michelle Hall		1		
Conor Keelan		1		
Sean Kelly		1		
Fiachra MacRaghnaill		1		
Pearse McGeough	1			
Andrea McKevitt		1		
Paddy McQuillan				1
Kevin Meenan	1			
Dolores Minogue		1		
Declan Power		1		
John Reilly		1		
Liam Reilly		1		
Tomás Sharkey	1			
John Sheridan		1		

Pio Smith		1		
Jim Tenanty				1
Eileen Tully		1		
Antóin Watters	1			
Maeve Yore			1	
	5	17	2	5

And Cllr John Reilly was deemed the approved nominee to the ERB Board.

### Minute No. 10/23

## Consideration of Reports and Recommendations from Chief Executive Monthly Management Report

### Support Services

Members expressed much dissatisfaction with Irish Water with various parts of the County having suffered severe water outages over the Christmas period particularly in the Mid Louth area. Lack of cohesive communication during the outages was highly criticized with an appeal for future outages and an estimated time for repair to be better communicated to both Elected members and the public.

### Strategic Economic Development

Members received updates on various items including Streetscape Enhancement Scheme, upcoming Local Area Plans and Dunleer Fire Station from Director of Services Thomas McEvoy.

### Placemaking & Physical Development

Members considered the report as issued and Catherine Duff Director of Services and John O'Hagan Senior Engineer responded to queries raised. The following items were highlighted:

- The new Athboy to Drogheda bus route was welcomed by Members
- Officials are in contact with the NTA on the newly launched Local Hackney Pilot Scheme. An appeal was made to ensure accessibility was available for all in any transport scheme.
- Members were given an update on the Newry Omeath Greenway and were advised a note would issue on same.
- Town & Village Playground works were originally planned to be community led but the Council have taken over works and are working closely with the community groups to ensure completion
- Active Travel schemes await NTA approval, an online non statutory consultation process will be held prior to any statutory process commencing
- The Bridge Street Tender is expected to issue in Q1
- Traffic calming measures are prioritized by accident data

Frustration was expressed at the perceived lack of progress on the Boyne Enterprise link road, with Members being advised of ongoing works in the background and two separate funding schemes for own and private lands.

### Organisational Development

- Louth County Council were noted as 9<sup>th</sup> highest in County for Dog License issue, but Director of Services Joe McGuinness agreed that it was believed a significant proportion of dog owners have not licensed their pets. Door to door checks are considered to be the most successful method of enforcement.
- Louth County Council are considering Rewilding and Forestation processes on own lands including those currently under con-acreage and grazing licences.

## **Social Development**

- Dundalk Library lift repair contract is in place.
- Accessibility issue with automatic door at Dundalk Library will be checked
- Survey to assess level of Affordable Housing interest closes on 10th February
- Grants scheme backlog is being prioritized before new applications are looked at or acknowledged
- Louth Library Service Sanctuary award was praised by Members. Members were advised that while Louth were only the second to get such an award, the council are the only ones to date who got it for all their libraries
- Historical and Archaeological donations from members of public are always welcomed by the Museum and Archivist

### **Minute No. 11/23**

## **Presentation by Flexibus**

Members received a presentation on the Flexibus Service from Miriam McKenna, Manager of the Louth Meath Fingal Local Link which was well received.

- An appeal was made for Members to advise of any required routes as the service is going to public tender. Where services are not used provision may be withdrawn. Low wheelchair usage was noted in Louth compared to other counties.
- Members made various suggestions around location signage, accessibility, possible routes and expansion of existing services.
- A call was made for volunteers to man the Community Car in Louth as only one Volunteer remains from an initial four. Volunteers drive their own cars and receive an allowance. Insurance is covered by the TFI / Local Link.
- A further call was made for bus drivers from CE or Tús Schemes.

### **Minute No. 12/23**

## **Suspension of Standing Orders to receive an Emergency Motion under Standing Order 18**

Following earlier agreement to receive an Emergency Motion the following was heard:

**Emergency Motion:** Cllr Michelle Hall  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Pio Smith

*Louth County Council's elected representatives and management will support the work of 'refugee and people seeking asylum' welcome groups in communities around the county, and adopt a zero tolerance from public representatives of any groups or individuals which adopt intimidatory tactics either online or in targeting the homes of refugees, and persons or families seeking asylum. Louth County Council will support the Irish Refugee Council's recommendations to National Government for increased investment immediately in appropriate accommodation with greater resources and trained personnel; appointment of a refugee response director and an inspector of emergency and transit accommodation; and the safeguarding of the most vulnerable.*

Louth County Council Chief Executive Joan Martin advised that there was a fundamental problem with a motion being put tabled by Members requiring the Management of Louth County Council to do something.

**An amendment to the motion to remove the word 'and management' from the first sentence was:**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Marianne Butler  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Tomás Sharkey

And agreed by Members, following which the motion now read as follows:

*Louth County Council's elected representatives will support the work of 'refugee and people seeking asylum' welcome groups in communities around the county, and adopt a zero tolerance from public representatives of any groups or individuals which adopt intimidatory tactics either online or in targeting the homes of refugees, and persons or families seeking asylum.*

*Louth County Council will support the Irish Refugee Council's recommendations to National Government for increased investment immediately in appropriate accommodation with greater resources and trained personnel; appointment of a refugee response director and an inspector of emergency and transit accommodation; and the safeguarding of the most vulnerable.*

Members present spoke in favour of this motion, referencing local far right demonstrations and misinformation being put out regarding refugees and those seeking sanctuary. It was stated that those whipping up anti-asylum sentiment had UKIP and Irish Freedom Party connections, and a general message was put forward was that all Members had to stand together to promote a 'Louth for All' message. Members referred to the spread of the Irish Diaspora globally, those having emigrated during the famine, and more recently those forced to flee from sectarian violence, with others speaking of tales of horror endured by those fleeing Ukraine. Members advised that they themselves had been targeted and approached while with family members and expressed a general message of condemnation to anti-asylum groups.

### Minute No. 13/23

#### Correspondence - Noted

- Kerry County Council 14th October 2022
- Limerick City and County Council 2nd December 2022
- Cork County Council 12th December 2022
- Cork County Council 12th December 2022
- Cork County Council 12th December 2022
- Meath County Council 3rd January 2023

There being no other business the meeting concluded.

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

Date: 20 Feb 2023

Cathaoirleach: Conor Keelan

Meeting Administrator: Aisling Womey