



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

Cruinniú Míósúil Chomhairle Contae Lú Louth County Council Monthly Meeting

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Louth County Council hosted in the Council Chamber of Co. Hall, Dundalk on Monday, 16th February 2026, at 10:00a.m.

In Attendance:

Presiding: Councillor Seán Kelly – Cathaoirleach

Members: Councillors: Marianne Butler, James Byrne, Kevin Callan, Bernie Conlon, Eric Donovan, Ciarán Fisher, Anne-Marie Ford, Michelle Hall, Rachel Kerley, Sionainn McCann, Debbie McCole, Pearse McGeough, Shane McGuinness, Andrea McKevitt, Paddy McQuillan, Kevin Meenan, Robert Nash, Ejiro O'Hare Stratton, Declan Power, John Reilly, John Sheridan, Pío Smith, Jim Tenanty, Antóin Watters, Maeve Yore

Apologies: Councillors: Emma Coffey, Fiona MhicConchoille, Dolores Minogue

Officials: David Conway, Chief Executive
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services
Joanna Kelly, Acting Director of Services
Bernadette Woods, Director of Finance
David Hanratty, Acting Director of Services
David Jones, Director of Services
Ger Murphy, Director of Services
Sinéad Dooley, Meetings Administrator
Susan Deery, Administrative Officer
Gavin McLaughlin, Communications Officer
Helen Divilly, Head of Information Systems
Amanda Brannigan, County Librarian
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer
Bryan Coughlan, Senior Executive Officer
Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer
Nikki Campbell, Head of LEO
Turlough King, Acting Senior Planner
Killian Owens, Administrative Officer
Brian Lynch, Financial Accountant
Ronan Matthews, Staff Officer
Liam McStravick, Clerical Officer

Minute No. 23/26

Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 19th January 2026

The Minutes were:-

Proposed by: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt
Seconded by: Cllr. Rachel Kerley
And Approved.

Minute No. 24/26

Matters Arising

- Cllr. Hall requested the provision of the report on Annagassan Traffic Calming as previously sought It was confirmed that the report would be furnished to her in the coming days.

Minute No. 25/26

Minutes of District Meetings – for noting

- Municipal District of Dundalk 9th December 2025

Minute No. 26/26

Minutes of Committee Meetings – for noting

- Corporate Policy Group 8th January 2026

Minute No. 27/26

Report from Chairperson of Corporate Policy Group

A report was delivered by An Cathaoirleach Seán Kelly on proceedings from the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 5th February 2026.

Minute No. 28/26

Strategic Policy Committee Chairpersons Report

Cllr. Kevin Meenan provided an update from the December meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee for Social Development.

Minute No. 29/26

Approval of Attendance at Conferences and Training Events

The list as put to the meeting was:-

Proposed by: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt
Seconded by: Cllr. Michelle Hall
And Approved.

Minute No. 30/26

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

Allocation of Members Community Grants as presented on the agenda was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Bernie Conlon
Seconded by: Cllr. Antóin Watters
And Approved.

Minute No. 31/26

Amendments to Standing Order – for adoption.

Amended Standing Orders, as presented to the Members were:

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
Seconded by: Cllr. Pio Smith
And Adopted.

Minute No. 32/26

Service Delivery Plan 2025 – End Year Update – for noting.

Mr. David Conway, Chief Executive presented the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 End of Year Update to the Members.

Mr. Conway confirmed that the Local Authority provides a service catalogue of 1,033 services, all of which are reflected in the Service Delivery Plan to track progress, development and delivery.

Members noted the content of the updated and requested further details in respect of completed actions and outstanding items within the Climate Action Plan.

- how the Local Authority is meeting Green Procurement targets.
- the reported Local Economic and Community Plan statistics, specifically the matter of actions sharing the same targets.

Minute No. 33/26

Draft Meeting Room Policy – for adoption

The Draft Meeting Room Policy for Elected Members was:

Proposed by: Cllr. James Byrne
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
And Adopted.

Minute No. 34/26

Louth Sports Partnership Vacancy

Following the resignation of Cllr. Shane McGuinness from the Louth Sports Partnership Committee, Members supported the nomination of Cllr. Declan Power to fill the vacancy.

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
Seconded by: Cllr. Jim Tenanty
And Resolved.

Minute No. 35/26

North East Regional Homeless Forum Vacancy

Following the resignation of Cllr. Robert Nash from the North East Regional Homeless Forum Members supported the nomination of Cllr. Kevin Meenan to fill the vacancy.

Proposed by: Cllr. Pearse McGeough
Seconded by: Cllr. Antóin Watters
And Resolved.

Minute No. 36/26

Approval of nomination of new LCDC Member

In accordance with Section 36 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 Members supported the nomination of Ms. Lorraine O'Malley as the new Department of Social Protection nominee to the Local Community Development Committee replacing Ms. Sharon Curran.

Proposed by: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Meenan
And Resolved.

Minute No. 37/26

In accordance with Standing Order No. 50, Members resolved to meet *in-committee* for part of the meeting to discuss a potential Louth County Council Civic Reception.

Proposed by: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt
Seconded by: Cllr. James Byrne
And Resolved.

Following a brief presentation by the Cathaoirleach, Members resolved to support the proposed Louth County Council Civic Reception.

Proposed by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
Seconded by: Cllr. Anne-Marie Ford
And Resolved.

The meeting then resumed in public session.

Minute No. 38/26

Presentation by Association of Irish Local Government

Members of the Association of Irish Local Government attended the meeting and delivered a comprehensive presentation as part of their Elected Member Communication and Engagement Roadshow.

Minute No. 39/26

Section 141 Reports 2024 – Compliance with Section 141 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended.

In accordance with Section 11 of the Local Government Act, as amended (which requires Members to report at least annually on the activities and operations of Bodies, Boards and Committees to which they are elected, appointed or nominated to represent Louth County Council).

- Cllr. Hall reported on the Droichead Arts Centre meeting which took place on 29th January 2026
- Cllr. Hall reported on the recent Regional Health Forum – Dublin North East meeting.

Minute No. 40/26

Report on reports submitted to the Cathaoirleach under Section 142 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended.

No reports were presented.

Minute No. 41/26

Breithniú ar Thuarascálacha ar Chomhréitigh ón bPríomhfheidhmeannach / Consideration of Reports and Recommendations from Chief Executives Monthly Management Report

Finance and System Support

No issues were highlighted in relation to Finance and System Support.

Economic Delivery

The following was noted in relation to Economic Delivery:

- Part 8 Application is the next stage in the development of the Boyne Valley Drive with a presentation on same to be made available to the Members.
- Regular communication, engagement and data sharing takes place between the Local Authority and the Department of Education on a range of matters including future developmental requirements for educational purposes.
- Assessment is underway on the 90 applications received under the Festival Grant Scheme.
- The St. Brigids Way route, running from Faughart, County Louth to Kildare, is currently being assessed.

Operations and Environment Delivery

The following was noted in relation to Operations and Environment Delivery:

- An eight-week programme to repair recent storm damage to roads across the county is currently underway, with an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 new potholes arising from the recent storms.
- Difficulties in accessing public lighting, which is out of order at The Glen, Drogheda along with repairs which are required on the external wall at Millmount will be investigated.
- Members will be furnished with plans for expenditure of the additional €1.2m in funding sought from Central Government.
- The Harbour Wall at Baltray will be investigated for repair.
- A report on ongoing stakeholder engagement to improve IBAL Results will be provided to Members.

- Guidance for Members on reporting flooding matters to the Local Authority will issue.
- For enforcement purposes, the potential for sharing available data from gateway speed advisory signs with An Garda Síochána, will be examined.
- Lighting issues at Colaiste ChuChulainn School, Dundalk, will be investigated.
- The Options Report for the Ramparts River Project is under review in advance of the required Part 8 Application.
- Additional information on the increased small bin/skip fires in Drogheda in Q4 2025 will be provided.
- Outcomes from Dog Fouling DNA trials undertaken in other counties will be assessed to determine effectiveness of the schemes.
- Details on the MyWaste initiative, including the number of estates contacted and followed up, were requested.
- Proposals for TII's consideration in respect to Park & Ride facilities are being developed.
- Timelines for repair works to Annagassan Bridge were requested; the bridge, whilst in disrepair, does not pose immediate danger.
- The status of EV ports in Omeath will be accessed and consideration given to relocating them to Greenore for use.
- A list of bus shelters within the county is to be circulated to Members.

HR, Corporate and Community Delivery

The following was highlighted in relation to HR, Corporate and Community Delivery:

- The purchase of five generators is intended to support community use in the event of an emergency and will not be limited to specific community centres.
- The recent cancellation of outdoor activities due to weather conditions was noted with Members advised to refer to the Play Policy in place and the requirement to seek Sports Capital funding for any future development of indoor spaces.
- The transfer of lands at Bully's Acre from the HSE to the Local Authority was discussed and Members were informed that the Local Authority is actively engaging with the HSE regarding this transfer.

Housing and Culture Delivery

The following was highlighted in relation to Housing and Culture Delivery:

- Changes to the Rental Legislation from 1st March 2026 will not affect existing tenancies.
- Engagement and collaboration with Domestic Violence Agencies and the Local Authority is ongoing, with support/advice given to those who require it at initial point of contact.

Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Delivery

The following was highlighted in relation to Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Delivery:

- The Carlingford/Omeath Greenway will close for a number of weeks to accommodate the installation of the Narrow Water Bridge. Members will be kept informed of details.
- It is envisaged that the Laurence Gate Plaza plans will progress to a Part 8 Application in Q2 2026 with teams actively engaging with the National Monuments Service.
- A combination of funding streams may be required to progress the second phase of St. Nicholas' Quarter, with applications due to open shortly for URDF funding and Failte Ireland supports.
- The proposed playpark at St. Dominics Park, Drogheda will progress to a Part 8 Application in Q2 2026.
- The Flood Relief Section intends to advance plans to assess flooding issues in Blackrock, with options to protect the main street to be made available at a future date.

- The Narrow Water Bridge development remains on budget with progress being made on the fabrication of the bridge in Belgium.
- There are no imminent plans for the removal of Hill Street Bridge, Dundalk which is owned by Irish Rail. A Part 8 Application approved in 2007 was not acted upon due to funding constraints.
- Phase 2 of the ongoing development of PANCR lands in Drogheda should be completed by year end with funding applications submitted for Phase 3.

Minute No. 42/26

Suspension of Standing Orders

In accordance with Standing Order Number 89, the Standing Orders were suspended to allow for the conclusion of business on the agenda.

Proposal of: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt
Seconded by: Cllr. Antóin Watters
And Resolved.

Minute No. 43/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Antóin Watters
Seconded: Cllr. Pearse McGeough

"That Louth County Council write to the Minister of Transport and Minister of State with responsibility for Road Safety, expressing no confidence in the Road Safety Authority (RSA) in its current format".

Reply: D. Hanratty, A/Director of Operations and Environment Delivery

This is a matter for the members.

Discussion

Members recognised the complexities of the matter raised by Cllr Watters and noted that they, as Councillors, also had responsibilities in this area. While there was broad support for the Motion, some Members suggested that a change in wording might be appropriate, in accordance with Standing Order No. 25.

Cllr. Watters held the view that an amendment was unnecessary. On that basis a roll call vote was taken to approve the Notice of Motion in its current form:

Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Marianne Butler	1			
James Byrne				1
Kevin Callan				1
Emma Coffey				1
Bernie Conlon	1			
Eric Donovan	1			
Ciarán Fisher	1			
Anne-Marie Ford	1			
Michelle Hall			1	
Seán Kelly	1			
Rachel Kerley				1
Sionainn McCann	1			
Debbie McCole	1			
Pearse McGeough	1			

Shane McGuinness				1
Andrea McKevitt	1			
Paddy McQuillan			1	
Fiona MhicConchoille				1
Kevin Meenan	1			
Dolores Minogue				1
Rober Nash	1			
Ejiro O'Hare Stratton			1	
Declan Power	1			
John Reilly				1
John Sheridan	1			
Pio Smith				1
Jim Tenanty				1
Antóin Watters	1			
Maeve Yore				1
Total Votes	15	-	3	11

Minute No. 44/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Pio Smith Dropped

"Disability Employment Targets - That this Council:

1. Notes that people with disabilities remain under-represented in public sector employment;
2. Affirms that the current 6% disability employment figure should be treated as a minimum baseline, and that retaining this level until 2030 lacks ambition;
3. Agrees, subject to lawful recruitment processes, to work towards aspirational targets of 8% disability employment by 2027 and 10% by 2030;
4. Requests the Chief Executive to prepare and publish a Disability Employment Implementation Plan, including improved consistency in reporting and timely publication of the Council's National Disability Authority return (Part 5) in Q1 of each year;
5. Directs that this motion be forwarded to the relevant Government Ministers, the National Disability Authority, and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

Note: Cllr. Smith's motion was dropped in accordance with Standing Order No. 23, which provides:

"A motion may either proposed by the member in whose name it stands or if he or she is absent, by any member authorised by him or her in writing to propose it on his or her behalf, but unless so proposed, and in the absence of a request in writing from the member in whose name it stands to postpone it, the motion shall be dropped and shall not again be set down in the Notice Paper except on fresh notice".

Minute No. 45/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Fiona Mhic Conchoille - Dropped

"That Louth County Council, recognizing housing as a social and human right, acknowledges the ongoing issue of overcrowding within the local authority housing stock and the negative impact this has on family wellbeing, children's development, and community stability.

The Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to examine and report on the feasibility of attic conversions in suitable council-owned houses as a potential, practical and cost-effective means of increasing bedroom capacity for existing tenant families, where appropriate, and where families

wish to remain in their current homes and communities. This examination should include consideration of structural suitability, full compliance with fire safety, building regulations and housing standards, and a detailed cost analysis. This analysis should have regard to indicative costs associated with attic conversions, generally estimated in the region of €30,000–€50,000 per dwelling, when compared with the average cost of delivering new-build local authority housing units, estimated at approximately €300,000–€350,000 per unit.

The report should further consider the potential benefits of such an approach, including reducing pressure on housing transfer lists, preventing unnecessary family displacement, addressing overcrowding in a timely manner, and making more effective use of existing public housing stock by enabling three-bedroom houses to function as four-bedroom homes where appropriate.

The Council further calls on the Chief Executive to bring a report on this matter before the Housing Strategic Policy Committee and the full Council within six months.

Go bhfuil Comhairle Chontae Lú ag aithint go bhfuil tithíocht mar chearta sóisialta agus daonna, ag tógáil faoi deara an fadhb leanúnach de phlódú le linn an stór tithíochta atá ag an údarás agus an tionchar diúltach ar sláinte teaghlaigh, forbairt an pháiste agus seasmhacht phobail mar thoradh de seo. Le seo, glaonn an comhairle ar an príomhfheidhmeannach chun scrúdú agus tuairisc a dhéanamh ar fhéidearthacht na n-athoiriúnaithe áiléir i dtithe oiriúnacha ag an chomhairle mar bhealach praiticiúil an toilleadh seomra leapa a mhéadú do theaghlaigh ag iarradh fanacht sna pobail ina bhfuil síad. Ba chóir don scrúdú seo smaoineamh a dhéanamh ar an oiriúnacht struchtúrach, comhlíonadh le sláinte tine, rialacháin fhoirgnimh agus anailís chostais a chur san áireamh. Ba chóir don anailís seo a bheith bunaithe ar na costais a ghabhann le athoiriúnaithe áiléir: le costais thart feadh €30,000 go €50,000 in aghaidh an tí, i gcomparáid leis an mheánchostais atá ar ionad tithíochta nua a thógáil - sa réigiún idir €300,000 agus €500,000 in aghaidh an ionaid. Chomh maith le seo, ba chóir don tuairisc seo a bheith in ann ná buntáistí a aithint agus cur chuige mar seo curtha i bhfeidhm, go háirithe ó thaobh an brú a laghdú maidir leis an liosta aistrithe. Leis an bhealach seo, ní bheadh aon chuir isteach gan gá ar na teaghlaigh agus ag an am céanna beidh dul i ngleic leis an phlódú ann sa mhodh is fearr: trí thithe le trí seomra leapa atá sa stór poiblí a bheith in ann dul i bhfeidhm mar thithe le ceithre seomra leapa nuair atá sé oiriúnach. Chomh maith le seo cuireann an comhairle glaoch ar an príomhfheidhmeannach tuairisc a chur in iúl roimh an Choiste don Bheartais Stráiteiseach Tithíochta le linn sé mhí.

Note: Cllr. Mhic Conchoille's motion was dropped in accordance with Standing Order No. 23, which provides:

“A motion may either proposed by the member in whose name it stands or if he or she is absent, by any member authorised by him or her in writing to propose it on his or her behalf, but unless so proposed, and in the absence of a request in writing from the member in whose name it stands to postpone it, the motion shall be dropped and shall not again be set down in the Notice Paper except on fresh notice”.

Minute No. 46/26

Notice of Question: Cllr. Declan Power

“Can Louth County Council outline its policy in relation to the treatment of Carer's Allowance as assessable income under the Differential Rent Scheme, including:

1. When this practice commenced
2. The rationale for treating Carer's Allowance as a second income
3. The number of social housing tenants currently affected by this assessment”.

Reply: Ger Murphy, Director of Housing and Culture Delivery

1. Prior to 2015, full-time basic rate Carers Allowance was fully reckonable for rent assessments purposes. This was amended in the 2015 Rent Scheme, whereby Carers Allowance was partially disregarded in the calculation of differential rent. Carers Allowance was calculated at the basic social welfare rate and the amount in excess of that figure was not treated as assessable income. This remains the case to date.
2. The sole source of income for a proportion of tenants is full-time basic rate Carers Allowance. Should Carers Allowance be treated as non-assessable, this proportion of tenants would have an assessable income of zero. A proportion of tenants are in receipt of multiple different social welfare payments, and these payments are deemed as assessable income, unless otherwise stated in the Rent Scheme. Some forms of payment, such as Child Benefit and Domiciliary Care Allowance, are not deemed as assessable income. Other payments such as full-time basic rate Carers Allowance are partially disregarded when assessing differential rent.
3. This information is not readily available and would require an analysis of individual housing files.

Minute No. 47/26

Correspondence

Members noted the following correspondence:

- Offaly County Council 22nd January 2026

Minute No. 48/26

Condolences

Condolences were extended to the family and friends of:

- Mr. Paddy Taaffe, O'Hanlon Park, Ardee
- Mr. Stephen Martin, Lennon Melia Terrace, Dundalk

Minute No. 49/26

Congratulations

- Congratulations were extended to Cllr. Maeve Yore on the recent births of her first grandchildren.

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

Date:

23rd MARCH '26

Cathaoirleach:



(P. McGeary)
Cathaoirleach

Meeting Administrator:

Sinead Doherty