



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, 19th January 2026, at 10:00a.m.

In Attendance:

- Presiding:** Councillor, Seán Kelly – Cathaoirleach
- Members:** Councillors: Marianne Butler, Kevin Callan, Emma Coffey, Bernie Conlon, Eric Donovan, Ciarán Fisher, Anne-Marie Ford, Michelle Hall, Rachel Kerley, Sionnain McCann (online), Debbie McCole, Pearse McGeough, Shane McGuinness, Andrea McKeivitt, Fiona MhicConchoille, Dolores Minogue, Robert Nash, Ejiro O'Hare Stratton, Declan Power, John Reilly, John Sheridan, Pío Smith, Jim Tenanty, Antóin Watters, Maeve Yore
- Apologies:** Councillors, James Byrne, Paddy McQuillan, Kevin Meenan,
- 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
Olivia McCormack, Senior Executive Officer
Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer
Helen Divilly, Head of Information Systems
John O'Hagan, Senior Engineer
Mark Johnston, Senior Engineer
Turlough King, Acting Senior Planner
Olivia McCormack, Senior Executive Officer
Amanda Brannigan, County Librarian
Gavin McLaughlin, Communications Officer
Aine Roddy, Assistant Communications Officer
Killian Owens, Administrative Officer
Olivia Gaskin, Senior Staff Officer

Minute No. 1/26

Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 15th December 2025

The Minutes were:-

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
Seconded by: Cllr. Maeve Yore
And Approved.

Minute No. 2/26

Matters Arising

- Cllr. McGeough sought an update on Minute No. 285/25 and queried whether contact had been made with Monaghan County Council regarding Departmental funding for the Ardee to Clontibret Road Improvement Scheme (N2). Director of Services, David Jones advised that an application for funding had been submitted and further details are awaited.
- Cllr. Hall sought access to the report on Annagassan Traffic Calming. It was confirmed that the report would be furnished to her in due course.
- Cllr. O'Reilly reiterated his request, in reference to Minute No.17/25, and recognising that a response had been received, that Revenue be invited to present to the Council on the availability of and access to their services. The Cathaoirleach agreed to writing again.

Minute No. 3/26

Minutes of District Meetings – for noting

- Municipal District of Dundalk 11th November 2025
- Borough District of Drogheda 1st December 2025

Minute No. 4/26

Minutes of Committee Meetings – for noting

- Corporate Policy Group 4th December 2025

Minute No. 5/26

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 8th January 2026.

Minute No. 6/26

Strategic Policy Committee Chairpersons Report

Cllr. Robert Nash, Chair of the Community & Placemaking SPC provided an update from the December meeting.

Minute No. 7/26

Approval of Attendance at Conferences

The list as put to the meeting was:-

Proposed by: Cllr. Michelle Hall
Seconded by: Cllr. Robert Nash
And resolved.

Minute No. 8/26

Agree date for March 2026 Council Meeting

In accordance with Standing Order No. 1 the next Ordinary Meeting of Plenary Council will take place on Monday 23rd March.

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

Minute No. 9/26

Climate Action and Sustainability SPC Chair Vacancy

In accordance with Section 48 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended, **Cllr. John Sheridan** was nominated to become Chair of the SPC for Climate Action and Sustainability.

Proposed by: Cllr. Shane McGuinness
Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Callan
And Resolved.

Members were advised that the composition of the SPC as approved by Council remains unchanged.

Minute No. 10/26

North East Regional Homeless Forum Vacancy following the resignation of Cllr. Robert Nash

Members agreed to defer this item until the February Monthly Meeting.

Minute No. 11/26

S183 Proposed Disposal of Fee Simple Interest in the property at Brenrick Villa, 61 Fair Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth to Patrick McQuillan

The disposal of property at Brenrick Villa, 61 Fair Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth to Patrick McQuillan was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Robert Nash
Seconded by: Cllr. Pio Smith
And resolved.

Minute No. 12/26

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).

No reports were presented.

Minute No. 13/26

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

No reports were presented.

Minute No. 14/26

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:

- Observations were made regarding the low numbers of Building Control Inspections as identified in the 2024 NOAC Report. Director of Services, Thomas McEvoy advised that this was attributable to an increase in commencements and insufficient resourcing at the time. He further confirmed that staffing levels were adequately resourced and that inspection targets would be met for 2025 and 2026.
- The cancellation of the 2026 Saint Patrick's Day Parade was discussed. Mr. McEvoy advised that the Executive is aware of the matter and reiterated that the event is not Council-run but rather supported through the Festival Grant Scheme. He also indicated that the Executive is

engaging with external bodies including BIDS, the Chamber of Commerce and Dundalk Credit Union, with a view to ensuring the festival takes place in 2027.

- Clarification was sought in relation to the annual Saint Patricks Day visit to New York. It was advised that the visit arises from an invitation issued by the County Louth Society and that the engagement is economic in nature rather than political.

Operations and Environment Delivery

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

- Enforcement of proper household bin storage was discussed. A/Director of Services, David Hanratty advised that enforcement is undertaken in accordance with the relevant Bye-Laws, with any breaches of planning conditions referred to the Planning Enforcement Office for investigation.
- The 2026 Road Works Programme is currently being drafted and will be presented at the February Borough/Municipal District Meetings.
- The inclusion of tertiary roads in the Road Works Programme was discussed. Mr. Hanratty advised that funding constraints apply and that the inclusion of specific roads is based on condition, usage and urgency. It was noted that the inclusion of such roads in the Municipal District of Ardee would represent a policy change and would require referral to the SPC.
- It was agreed that details of applications received for under *The Hare's Corner* Biodiversity initiative would be circulated to the Members.
- Flooding issues on the Coes Road, Dundalk would be raised with Uisce Éireann at a meeting scheduled to take place in the coming weeks.
- Issues relating to lighting and safety on the Armagh Road, Dundalk were raised. Mr. Hanratty agreed to investigate the availability of lighting ducting and to request that the Road Safety Officer undertake road safety awareness campaigns.
- Gritting along Bellurgan Point, Dundalk and the potential extension to additional routes was discussed. Mr. Hanratty advised that, while demand for additional locations is high, the area would be reviewed.
- An update on winter gritting resources was sought. Mr. Hanratty confirmed that two new replacement gritting trucks are due for delivery at the end of the month, and that report on the gritting budget would issue.
- The Executive confirmed that submission of an Expression of Interest under the new Urban Nature-based Solutions Fund (closing 23rd January 2026) is under consideration.
- Mr. Hanratty confirmed that a Bus Stop Enhancement Programme is being considered and will be brought forward when available.
- Requests relating to graffiti removal and remedial works at the Marshes Avenue were noted and will be assessed over the coming weeks.
- Ongoing illegal dumping and the use of CCTV were discussed, with Mr. Hanratty agreeing to examine the potential use of covert cameras.
- The use of scramblers in areas such as Ashling Park, Dundalk was highlighted with Mr. Hanratty confirming the matter would be investigated in line with existing Bye-Laws.
- Mr. Hanratty confirmed that details on applications received under the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) would be provided at a later date.
- Mr. Hanratty agreed to circulate a list of bus shelters within the County.
- A request for drain cleaning on Barrack Street, Dundalk following a recent flooding event was noted, with Mr. Hanratty agreeing to review the matter with the Operations team.
- Mr. Hanratty advised that comparative costings for Cold RAP (recycled asphalt plainings) versus Tar and Chip would be provided in due course.
- A request to clean the welcome sign on the Dublin Road into Drogheda was noted. Mr. Hanratty confirmed the matter would be assessed and advised that particular focus will be placed on the presentation of road signage during 2026.

HR, Corporate and Community Delivery

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

- Following a discussion on the Council's use of the social media platform "X", A/Director of Services Joanna Kelly confirmed that the matter would be referred to the CPG for consideration.
- Ms. Kelly advised that the development of a swimming pool in the Ardee area would be regarded as a longer-term project, which is not included in the Council's current three-year Capital Programme. However, it was noted that a submission could be made through the County Development Plan process and considered in that context.

Housing and Culture Delivery

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

- Director of Services, Ger Murphy advised that it is hoped that a Cost Rental Scheme for Dundalk will be delivered in 2026.
- The 2024 NOAC Scrutiny Report was referenced, including statistics relating to library visitor numbers and per-capita expenditure. Mr. Murphy advised that a new Library Service Development Plan is now in place, which is intended to support increased readership and expenditure.
- Mr. Murphy advised that the Council is currently awaiting confirmation of the 2026 funding for Housing Adaption Grants.
- It was noted that the full €12m allocation for 2025 under the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme was expanded, supporting Tenant in Situ and disabled households. Mr Murphy further advised that an Anti-Social Behavioural Policy is in place, supported by ongoing tenant engagement through a well-resourced team.
- Mr. Murphy confirmed that, under the Second-Hand Acquisition Scheme, where a first-time buyer is identified as seeking to purchase a property, the Council withdraws from the bidding process.
- Mr. Murphy clarified that the NOAC published figure of 113 weeks for housing relets was incorrect and that the error in reporting had been addressed at the NOAC Scrutiny session conducted on 30th October 2025. The correct figure stands at 39 weeks.
- In response to a query regarding eligibility under the SEAI Scheme, Mr. Murphy agreed to revert with confirmation as to whether the replacement of a fossil-fuel boiler is covered.

Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Delivery

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

- Director of Services, David. Jones advised that the Boyne Greenway Phase 1 has been tendered, with the closing date imminent.
- It was confirmed that the location of the proposed Glen Playground has been identified and that all relevant information has been collated following recent neighbourhood consultation. A briefing will be provided to the Borough District of Drogheda Members in advance of the Part 8 planning process, which is anticipated in the first half of 2026.
- An update was provided on the Laurence Gate Plaza project, noting that works are ongoing and that a number of the required surveys have now been completed. A project team is in place to progress the scheme, with the intention of proceeding to Part 8 planning in the first half of 2026. Further updates will issue in advance of the Part 8 process.
- Receipt of the Council's Active Travel allocation for 2026 was confirmed, noting that it represents a reduction on previous years. It was advised that this reduction will impact the previously envisaged delivery of projects on the ground, including the pathfinder projects.
- The "Living in Carlingford" Scheme was noted with confirmation that detailed design work is currently underway to ensure readiness for future funding calls under the Rural Regeneration

Development Fund, which is expected to be announced shortly. A briefing on the detailed design will be provided to the Municipal District of Dundalk Members in due course.

- Mr. Jones advised that take up of one-to-one engagement sessions with property owners, as part of Public Consultation No. 3 for the proposed Dundalk-Carlingford Greenway, has been low to date. Members are asked to encourage the public to avail of the opportunity to engage with the Project Team.
- Confirmation was received that tenders for construction stage on the N53 Roads Contract have been assessed and a tender report will issue shortly to TII seeking approval to proceed to appointment.
- Tenders for the design and planning phase for the proposed new link road from the Armagh Road to the Red Cow (R177) are currently being assessed.
- Mr. Jones confirmed that the design phase for the proposed Navy Bank development is provided for within the current three-year Capital Programme, with a Part 8 planning process in Q1 of 2026. The Municipal District of Dundalk Members will be briefed prior to publication of the Part 8 documentation.

Minute No. 15/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. John O'Reilly
Seconded: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt

That Louth County Council calls on Bus Éireann to undertake the appropriate feasibility study for assessing the provision of a dedicated bus service to Monksland National School in Carlingford, and to examine the potential integration of this service with the existing transport route serving Bush Post Primary School, located approximately 800 metres from Monksland National School.

Reply from David Jones, Director of Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Delivery

This is a matter for the Members.

Discussion:

Following discussion and noting that there are 11 schools located on the Cooley Peninsula it was agreed that the Notice of Motion be amended to provide that a letter issue to the Regional School Transport Manager (East) seeking a meeting to discuss school transport provision in the area.

Proposed by: Cllr. Antóin Watters
Seconded by: Cllr. Ciarán Fisher
And resolved.

Minute No. 16/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Ciarán Fisher
Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Callan

I call on Louth County Council to undertake and develop a clear management plan to address overgrown trees, with particular reference to how it manages them in housing estates, urban areas, and where they overlap with critical infrastructure.

In light of the number of representations we received this time last year on this issue, the fact that matters have not improved, and the damage we saw from a storm blowing in—in the form of Storm Eowyn in 2025—this plan should be brought before the members for consideration as a matter of urgency.

I suggest that this plan include scope for councillor instruction to cut trees negatively impacting people's quality of life, and that a precedent be set that, when a tree is preventing or posing a difficulty to a service or amenity at a residential address or business (such as connecting broadband. electrical supply, the installation of solar panels, etc.), the tree is trimmed/pollarded, or removed and offset, to allow the provision of the service or amenity."

Reply: David Hanratty, A/Director of Services, Operations and Environment Delivery

A tree management strategy is currently under development, and it will be discussed at the Climate Change SPC in the first quarter of 2026. The strategy will be based on available guidance and best practice.

The decision as to the deployment of resources for tree management or other maintenance works is an executive function. The parks section currently carries out periodic tree condition surveys in the areas that have mature trees and high footfall e.g. designated public parks. This work is done on a 4/5-year cycle, and this can be reduced to 2/3 years where the trees are perceived to be of higher risk. Trees at a higher risk of failure are removed immediately by arborist contractors. We also have a robust tree removal procedure for emergency events.

Utility companies must liaise with landowners where they wish to remove/ prune trees which are interfering with their infrastructure. An exception to this is the ESB under Section 98 of the Electricity (Supply) Act 1927, as amended by the Electricity Regulation Act 1999, have powers to deal with trees without landowner consent. As a landowner, Louth County Council will liaise with Utility Companies to address their concerns.

If a member of the public or a Local Representative has a safety concern about a tree, the Council Operations section should be informed through the usual channels.

Minute No. 17/26

Notice of Motion: Cllr. Marianne Butler
Seconded: Cllr. John Sheridan

"That Louth County Council requests that the government honours the commitment to fully fund and develop the two Pathfinder projects in 2026 and that we write to the NTA and Minister for Transport requesting a clear timeline for delivering and funding both Pathfinder and other key Active Travel projects that have planning permission or are due to be approved in the coming months".

Reply: David Jones, Director of Services, Major Capital Projects & Infrastructure Delivery

The Council has engaged with the NTA in relation to realising the Active Travel Projects for both Dundalk and Drogheda, in particular the Pathfinder projects which have been significantly advanced, with the expectation, subject to funding approval, to commence in 2026. The Council will further write to the parties as outlined in this Notice of Motion in support of the Executive's efforts on the matter, subject to the members' agreement.

Discussion:

It was agreed that Cllr. Butler would provide proposed wording of the correspondence to issue to the NTA, reflecting additional points raised during discussion, including the wider implications for road safety and climate action objectives.

Minute No. 18/26

Notice of Question: Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt

Please quantify in percentage terms the amount of lands in the emerging preferred route of the Dundalk Bay to Carlingford is

- i) on private land*
- ii) on public land*

Reply: David Jones, Major Capital Projects & Infrastructure Delivery

The total area of the emerging preferred route corridor is circa 303 hectares. It should be noted that the area of the preferred route within the corridor is between 6-8 metres in width and will equate to circa 18-24 hectares.

Accordingly, the emerging preferred route corridor area of 303 hectares is not representative of the final land required to construct the proposed project and therefore the proportion of lands required that is either public or privately owned will change as the preferred route is identified.

Of the 303 hectares within the emerging preferred route corridor, 6.4% is state owned lands, 19.7% is unregistered lands and 73.9% is privately registered land, of which 4.8% represents privately owned roadbed.

When considering the route within the corridor, it is expected that the amount of privately registered lands required for the proposed project will significantly decrease, with the majority of the land required being a combination of state-owned lands or privately owned roadbed.

Minute No. 19/26

Notice of Question: Cllr. Debbie McCole

Can Louth County Council provide the following data;

The overall number of housing allocations made in 2025 split by;

- 1. Each Municipal District*
- 2. The area of choice within each MD*
- 3. The bedroom size within (i) and (ii)*
- 4. Average waiting time of (iii)*
- 5. How many of the overall number of allocations are local authority managed or VHB's*

Reply: Ger Murphy, Director of Services, Housing and Culture Delivery

The table below outlines the information requested. Louth County Council – Housing Allocations Summary by Areas of Choice 2025									
	Average Wait Time (years)				Number of Properties Allocated				
	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4+ Bedroom	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4+ Bedrooms	Total Allocations
Dundalk	4.6	6.3	6.3	5.5	56	82	72	16	226
Blackrock / Haggardstown / Dromiskin	-	5.0	11.7	5.0	0	2	3	1	6
Carlingford / Omeath / Greenore	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
Knockbridge	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
Dundalk Municipal District Total	4.6	5.7	9.0	5.3	56	84	75	17	232
Ardee	2.3	4.5	5.7	6.0	4	13	8	1	26
Castlebellingham / Kilsaran	6.0	8.2	4.0	-	1	7	3	0	11

Collon	-	2.0	-	-	0	1	0	0	1
Dunleer / Tinure	3.0	3.0	4.5	-	1	4	3	0	8
Louth Village	2.0	5.0	-	8.0	1	3	0	1	5
Tallanstown	5.0	-	2.0	-	1	0	2	0	3
Ardee Municipal District Total	3.7	4.5	4.1	7.0	8	28	16	2	54
Drogheda North	5.3	5.8	8.0	5.7	25	71	36	8	140
Drogheda South	5.6	6.5	6.9	4.5	23	65	110	4	202
Clogherhead	-	-	6.8	-	0	0	5	0	5
Termonfeckin	-	5.0	7.0	-	0	1	1	0	2
Tullyallen	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
Drogheda Municipal District Total	5.5	5.8	7.2	5.1	48	137	152	12	349
Total housing provided by LA					245				
Total housing provided by AHB					390				
Total Allocations 2025					635				

Minute No. 20/26

Notice of Question: Cllr. Ciarán Fisher

“Could the housing section provide a breakdown of the percentage of refusals they have received, yearly, since the introduction of the CBL system? If possible, could information be included on the types of houses (amount of rooms etc) and per MD?”

Reply: Ger Murphy, Director of Services, Housing and Culture Delivery

The CBL Allocations system was introduced in 2017. The table below outlines allocations and refusals from 2018 to 2025. The majority of these refusals are where an applicant was successful in bidding on CBL, received a provisional offer of an allocation, and subsequently refused the offer.

Year	No of Refusals Dundalk	Bedrooms	No of Refusals Drogheda	Bedrooms	No of Refusals Ardee	Bedrooms	Total Allocations	Total Refusals	% Refusals overall	% of Refusals overall - Dundalk	% of Refusals overall - Drogheda	% of Refusals overall - Ardee
2018	10	7 x 2 bed	19	7 x 2 bed	7	4 x 2 bed	293	36	12%	3%	6%	2%
		3 x 3 bed		9 x 3 bed		2 x 3 bed						
				3 x 4 bed		1 x 4 bed						
2019	27	14 x 2 bed	16	10 x 2 bed	5	3 x 1 bed	184	48	26%	15%	9%	3%
		11 x 3 bed		5 x 3 bed		1 x 2 bed						
		2 x 3 bed		1 x 4 bed		1 x 3 bed						
2020	40	4 x 1 bed	19	5 x 1 bed	7	1 x 1 bed	167	66	40%	24%	11%	4%
		15 x 2 bed		2 x 2 bed		6 x 2 bed						
		17 x 3 bed		12 x 3 bed								
		4 x 4 bed										
2021	68	24 x 2 bed	56	2 x 1 bed	22	9 x 1 bed	513	146	28%	13%	11%	4%
		33 x 3 bed		23 x 2 bed		6 x 2 bed						
		4 x 4 bed		26 x 3 bed		6 x 3 bed						
				5 x 4 bed		1 x 4 bed						
2022	40	9 x 1 bed	42	10 x 1 bed	7	1 x 1 bed	515	89	17%	8%	8%	1%
		15 x 2 bed		17 x 2 bed		4 x 2 bed						
		15 x 3 bed		12 x 3 bed		2 x 3 bed						
		1 x 4 bed		3 x 3 bed								
2023	40	7 x 1 bed	42	8 x 1 bed	11	3 x 1 bed	404	93	23%	10%	10%	3%
		15 x 2 bed		24 x 2 bed		4 x 2 bed						
		8 x 3 bed		9 x 3 bed		3 x 3 bed						
				1 x 4 bed		1 x 5 bed						
2024	26	4 x 1 bed	50	6 x 1 bed	12	3 x 1 bed	727	88	12%	4%	7%	2%
		12 x 3 bed		16 x 2 bed		2 x 2 bed						
		6 x 3 bed		21 x 3 bed		4 x 3 bed						
		4 x 4 bed		7 x 4 bed		3 x 4 bed						
2025	31	3 x 1 bed	57	5 x 1 bed	9	2 x 1 bed	635	97	15%	5%	9%	1%
		15 x 2 bed		37 x 2 bed		2 x 2 bed						
		11 x 3 bed		13 x 3 bed		5 x 3 bed						
		2 x 4 bed		2 x 4 bed								
TOTALS	282		301		80		3,438	663	Average Refusal Rate for the period 2018 – 2025: 19%			

Minute No. 21/26

Correspondence

Members noted the following correspondence:

- Clare County Council 9th December 2025
- Clare County Council 9th December 2025
- Clare County Council 9th December 2025

Minute No. 22/26

Congratulations

- Congratulations were extended to Cllr. Andrea McKeivitt on her recent marriage.

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

Date:

16th Feb '26

Cathaoirleach:

Lia Dwy

Meeting Administrator:

Sinead Dwy