



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL - CORPORATE POLICY GROUP

Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held in the Setanta Meeting Room,
County Hall, on Thursday, 4th June 2026 at 9:30am

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach, Cllr: Seán Kelly

Members, Cllrs: Rachel Kerley, Kevin Meenan, Robert Nash, John Sheridan
(online), Pío Smith

Officials: David Conway, Chief Executive
Thomas McEvoy, Director of Services
Sinéad Dooley, Acting Director of Services
Bernadette Woods, Director of Services
David Hanratty, Acting Director of Services
David Jones, Director of Services
Ger Murphy, Director of Services
Susan Deery, Deputy Meetings Administrator

Apologies:

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 7th May 2026

The minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 7th May 2026 were confirmed
as

Proposed by: Cllr. Rachel Kerley

Seconded by: Cllr. Robert Nash

And approved

2. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

3. SPC Work Programme – Update from each SPC Chair

Cllr. Nash confirmed that the Community and Placemaking SPC is progressing the
Memorial and Cemetery Bye-Laws, with an update to follow after its next meeting.

Cllr. Kerley advised that the Planning SPC recently met, focusing on the Shopfront Policy Guidelines, which will be circulated to Members and brought to Plenary Council.

Cllr. Meenan noted that the Draft Library Plan is being progressed and will issue to Members ahead of the next SPC, with a view to presentation at the July Plenary Council meeting. He also confirmed ongoing work on the Tenant Engagement and Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. Mr. Ger Murphy, Director of Services, advised that the Strategic Review of the County Museum is underway, with further details to follow in September.

Cllr. Smith advised that the Economic Development SPC continues to implement the economic objectives of the LECF and will consider the Shopfront Improvement Grants at its next meeting, alongside ongoing delivery of the Tourism Strategy.

Cllr. Sheridan confirmed that the Climate Change and Sustainability SPC has reviewed its work programme, with 17 projects currently being delivered under the Climate Action Programme and Biodiversity Action Plan.

4. Vacancy on the SPC for Social Development

Director of Services Mr. Ger Murphy advised that a vacancy remains on the SPC for Social Development following Cllr. Joanna Byrne's election to Dáil Éireann. It was agreed that Cllr. Kevin Meenan would consider nominating Cllr. Debbie McCole to fill the vacancy, noting that she is not currently a member of an SPC.

5. Council Meeting Draft Agenda

Acting Director of Services, Sinéad Dooley, presented the June Council Meeting Agenda to the Members and highlighted specific matters arising, including:

- Annual General Meeting to commence at 10.15am
- Plenary Council Meeting to commence at 10.30am
- Annual Report 2025 for adoption
- Nominee to the Regional Health Forum – Dublin North East, due to the resignation of Cllr. Michelle Hall
- Audit Committee Annual Report 2025 and Standing Orders for noting, and adoption of the Audit Committee Charter and Work Programme 2026.
- Director of Services Mr. Ger Murphy advised that three Section 183 Applications would also be added to the Agenda for approval which relates to Incremental Purchase Schemes, where all matters have now been resolved.

Members considered a Notice of Motion requesting that Council owned buildings be lit up in blue to mark World Drowning Prevention Day. It was noted that the existing policy requires review, including issues relating to infrastructure, maintenance, and potential costs, as well as the need to avoid overuse of lighting requests. It was agreed that a draft updated policy, including cost implications, be presented at the next CPG meeting.

6. Travel Arrangement for Elected Members

Cllr. Sean Kelly presented an AILG opinion regarding travel costs for Members attending conferences in their capacity as Cathaoirleach. Director of Finance, Ms. Bernadette Woods confirmed that policy and procedures, as set out under national regulations, were applied, noting that the annual conference allocation is capped at €700 per Member, with any additional costs borne by the Member.

It was noted that the matter arose in the context of a recent invitation to attend an international conference, where estimated costs exceeded the approved limit, giving rise to differing views regarding the application of the policy.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Executive would review the AILG opinion and revert in due course.

7. Legal Opinion regarding the allocations of Members Funds

Acting Director of Services Ms. Sinéad Dooley advised Members of legal opinion obtained in relation to the allocation of Members' funds, the conclusion of which was that the proposed funding would be contrary to, and therefore *ultra vires* the powers of the Elected Members under, Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Members queried the non-circulation of the legal advice and were advised that such opinions are subject to legal privilege, have not historically been shared, and that no precedent could be established in this regard.

8. To note Members Allocations

Members noted the Members Allocations as presented.

9. Attendance at Conferences and Events

Director of Finance Ms. Bernadette Woods advised that AILG training is not subject to the €700 conference cap, as it is not classified as a conference.

Acting Director of Services Ms. Sinéad Dooley further advised that a potential discount may be available for the Summit of Cities Conference, depending on attendance numbers.

10. Regional Health Forum – Dublin North East Vacancy

The vacancy on the Regional Health Forum arising from the resignation of Cllr. Michelle Hall was considered, and it was agreed that the Party Whips would discuss the matter in advance of the Plenary Council meeting.

11. Any other business

County Development Plan Variation No. 4 – Director of Services Mr. Thomas McEvoy advised that 98 submissions were received in respect of County Development Plan Variation No. 4, with a draft variation report due by end June 2026. It was agreed that a briefing would be held online on 18 June 2026 at 4.30pm.

Members Devices – Cllr. Kelly noted that Members have been contacted by IT to confirm their preferences for devices (phone/iPad or phone/laptop), which was welcomed.

Civic Reception – The Corrs – Cllr. Kelly and Members commended the organising team for the successful hosting of The Corrs Civic Reception on Friday, 29 May 2026. Chief Executive, Mr. David Conway, also acknowledged and congratulated the organisation of all three events held on that date.

Cllr. Kelly expressed his appreciation to Members and staff for their support during his term as Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council, noting that this was his final meeting of the CPG in that role. Members and the Chief Executive commended Cllr. Kelly on a successful year in office.

The Minutes were confirmed at a meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on:

Date:

9th July '26

Cathaoirleach:

Dáire Hing

Meetings Administrator:

Sinead Doolan