



**ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Economic Enterprise & Rural Development Strategic Policy Committee Meeting

Location: Council Chamber & Microsoft Teams

Date Wednesday, 18 February 2026

Time: 11.30am

PRESIDING: Councillor Mark Casey

PRESENT: Councillor Garry Murtagh, Niall Gannon, Martin Monaghan,
Seamus Butler, John Coyle

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. John Brannigan, Director of Service
Mr. John McKeon, Director of Service
Mr. Michael Nevin, Senior Executive Officer
Ms. Martina McGrath, Senior Executive Officer
Ms. Denise Canavan, Tourism Officer
Mr. Colm Croffy, Just Transition Fund Tourism Activator
Mr. David Barden Administrative Officer
Ms. Louise Connaughton, Clerical Officer

APOLOGIES: Margaret McDonald, Loretta Grogan, John Kiernan

MEETINGS

ADMINISTRATOR: Ms. Lorraine McKee

1. INTRODUCTION

Chairperson Mark Casey welcomed the members to the Economic Enterprise & Rural Development Strategic Policy Committee meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Seamus Butler and Councillor Martin Monaghan indicated that they are rate payers in Longford Town.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF ECONOMIC, ENTERPRISE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT SPC MEETING HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2025

On the proposal of Councillor Martin Monaghan seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler the minutes of the meeting of the Economic, Enterprise and Rural Development Strategic Policy Committee on 22 October 2025 were adopted.

4. TOURISM CLG UPDATE - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Head of Enterprise, Michael Nevin provided the Members with an update on the governance structures for the Longford County Tourism Committee and the Longford County Tourism CLG. He provided the Members with details on the revised Terms of Reference for the County Tourism Committee and an updated Memorandum of Understanding between Longford County Council and Longford County Tourism CLG. Both documents outlined the objectives for Longford Tourism going forward and clearly defined the relationship between the Tourism CLG and the Local Authority. It is proposed to bring forward these documents to the next CPG meeting for consideration and approval in advance of consideration and adoption by the full Council in March.

5. PROPOSED SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT SCHEMES 2026

Small Rate Payer Support Scheme

Director of Service, John McKeon made a presentation to the Members on the Small Rate Payer Support Scheme and answered questions raised by the Members.

The presentation included the following:

- Small Rate Payer Support Scheme Legislative Requirements
- Commercial Rates – Properties to Revenue Relationship
- Bands for Small Rate Payer Support Scheme

The SPC Members considered the Councils Small Rate Payers Support Scheme in full. On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler seconded by Councillor Niall Gannon it was recommended that the Small Rate Payer Support Scheme be brought to the CPG for consideration and approval in advance of consideration and adoption by the full Council in March.

The Business Incentive Scheme & the Shop Front Enhancement Scheme

Head of Enterprise, Michael Nevin made a presentation to the Members on the proposed introduction of two schemes: -the Business Incentive Scheme for Occupation of Vacant Commercial/Industrial Properties and the Shop Front Enhancement Scheme.

The Business Incentive Scheme

The BIS scheme is designed to encourage the productive occupation of vacant commercial premises in the County. The scheme sets out mechanism, eligibility, and conditions for new businesses to receive financial assistance from the Council for the

purpose to locate in premises that have been vacant for a period exceeding 6 months. The scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis at the Economic, Enterprise & Rural Development SPC.

The SPC Members considered the Councils Business Incentive Scheme in full. On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler seconded by Councillor Garry Murtagh it was recommended that the Business Incentive Scheme be brought to the CPG for consideration and approval in advance of consideration and adoption by the full Council in March.

The Shop Front Enhancement Scheme

The mechanism, eligibility and conditions for the Shop Front Enhancement Scheme were laid out to the members and discussed. The principal objective of the Shop Front Enhancement Scheme Incentive is to encourage or support Retailers in Town and Village centres to enhance the physical appearance of their premises, by supporting the cost of planned works. The maximum support available to any individual applicant is €600 or 50% of the cost of the works procured, whichever is less. The Scheme will run for 2026 and continuation of the Scheme, subject to budget being made available, beyond 2026 will be decided at the last Economic & Rural Enterprise Development SPC meeting of 2026.

The SPC Members considered the Councils Shop Front Enhancement Scheme in full. On the proposal of Councillor Martin Monaghan seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler it was recommended that the Councils Shop Front Enhancement Scheme be brought to the CPG for consideration and approval in advance of consideration and adoption by the full Council in March.

Appointment to sub-committee

On the proposal of Councillor Martin Monaghan seconded by Councillor Niall Gannon it was agreed to appoint the following Councillors to a new sub-committee to assess applications for both the Business Incentive Scheme and the Shop Front Scheme.

- Councillor Garry Murtagh
- Councillor Seamus Butler
- Councillor Mark Casey

6. THE APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER TO THE LECP/IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ADVISORY STEERING GROUP (SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVE)

On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler seconded by Councillor Mark Casey, sectoral representative John Coyle was appointed to the LECP/Implementation Plan Advisory Steering Group.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The proposed date for the next meeting of the Economic Enterprise & Rural Development Strategic Policy Committee is 29 April 2026 to which the members unanimously agreed.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Lorraine McKee
Meetings Administrator

**Confirmed and adopted at Economic Enterprise & Rural Development Strategic Policy
Committee Meeting held on the 29 April 2026.**

Signed: _____
Chairperson