

**Minutes of Meeting of Longford County Council
held in the Council Chamber and via Microsoft Teams on
Wednesday, 12 March at 4pm**

PRESIDING: Councillor Mark Casey

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Paul Ross, Niall Gannon, Garry Murtagh, Gerry Hagan, Padraig McNamara, Turlough McGovern, Martin Skelly, Seamus Butler, Uruemu Adejinmi, Mick Cahill, Pat O'Toole, Sean Mimmagh, David Cassidy, Martin Monaghan, Peggy Nolan

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. Paddy Mahon, Chief Executive
Mr. Michael Nevin, A/Director of Services
Mr. John Brannigan, Director of Services
Mr. John McKeon, Director of Services
Ms. Samantha Healy, Director of Services
Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services
Ms. Martina McGrath, Senior Executive Officer

APOLOGIES: Councillor Kevin Hussey

MEETINGS

ADMINISTRATOR: Ms. Lorraine McKee

1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- (i) On the proposal of Councillor Paul Ross seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill the Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Longford County Council held on 12 February 2025, as circulated, were confirmed, and adopted.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

None

4. MANAGEMENT REPORT

Noted

5. (i) TO NOTE ADOPTED MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2025

Noted

6. FINANCE, INNOVATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(i) CONSIDERATION OF THE CAPITAL BUDGET 2025-2027

John McKeon, Director of Services presented to the Members the three year Capital Budget 2025 to 2027. This investment programme is subject to Grant & Loan Funding and will change as this becomes known and is always also subject to Capital Reserves & Development Levies being available to the Local Authority.

The members raised their concerns from the presentation in relation to the provision of Affordable Housing, funding for the Void Programme, provision of Playgrounds, the provision for a new headquarters for the Civil Defence and the need for Industrial Sites. John McKeon responded to the members queries.

John McKeon thanked Fema Flannigan, Financial Accountant in the preparation of the Capital Budget and he also thanked the Directors of Services for their input.

On the proposal of Councillor Mick Cahill, seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan, the Capital Budget 2025-2027 was adopted.

(ii) TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE SPC MEETING HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2024

Noted

(iii) NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillors Paul Ross and Martin Skelly and seconded by Councillor Mark Casey

We call on the Minister for Arts, Media and Communications to introduce a statutory timeline for providers to repair broadband and phone lines to

customers and businesses. The current situation has left thousands of customers with no communication and no idea of when the service will be restored.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to the Minister for Arts, Media and Communications in relation to the above Notice of Motion.

7. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

(i) TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SPC MEETING HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2024

Noted

(ii) NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Martin Monaghan and seconded by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi

I call on Longford County Council to allow communities to apply for funding for generators for community centres/halls. These facilities proved to be vital in providing an emergency hub for our communities, as seen in the most recent storm.

Response:

Activities and projects that benefit the local community are eligible for consideration for funding under the Community Grant Scheme 2025. The Scheme is currently open for applications and any application received for funding for generators for community centres/halls by the closing date of 4pm on Monday 31 March 2025 will be considered for funding by the Elected Members of the relevant Municipal District in which the facility is situated.

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Peggy Nolan and seconded by Councillor Paul Ross

I call on Longford County Council following the impact of storm Darragh and Eowyn, to seek funding from the National Government to put in place, community hubs in each municipal area and to have those hubs equipped and supported to serve our communities in future emergencies. The funding must cover the provision of generators and as the fund should be an annual allocation. Resources could be expanded to support and serve the public in times of crisis and future emergencies. This funding must be used at the discretion of Longford County Council to ensure all plans put in place can effectively assist the most vulnerable in our communities.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to the Minister in relation to the above Notice of Motion.

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Padraig McNamara and seconded by Councillor Martin Monaghan

I call on Longford County Council to write to Minister for Housing James Browne regarding the Housing Adaption Grants for Older People and People with Disabilities, highlighting the urgent need for a review. The current grant criteria fail to adequately support the most vulnerable in our society, as they do not cover essential upgrades such as emergency fire exits for bedrooms where double-glazed windows are in place, despite these windows being unsuitable as escape routes. Additionally, the grants should incorporate renewable energy solutions to reduce heating costs, ensuring that older people and individuals with disabilities can live safely and affordably in their homes.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to the Minister for Housing in relation to the above Notice of Motion.

8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(i) APPOINTMENT OF SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVE – JAMES KIERNAN (DEVELOPMENT/CONSTRUCTION SECTOR) TO THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler, seconded by Councillor Turlough McGovern, it was agreed to appoint James Kiernan to the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee.

(ii) ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2025

Martina McGrath, Senior Executive Officer presented to the Members the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025. This plan sets out the principal services the Council proposes to deliver by the end of the year within existing constraints on funding and resources and was developed through a process that involved the Council Management Team and all Senior Officers. The plan was prepared in the context of a wide range of local, regional and national plans and strategies including the new Corporate Plan 2025-2029.

On the proposal of Councillor Mick Cahill, seconded by Councillor Turlough McGovern, the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 was adopted.

(iii) TO NOTE MINUTES OF ECONOMIC, ENTERPRISE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT SPC MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2024

Noted

(iv) NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Gerry Hagan and seconded by Councillor Garry Murtagh

I call on Longford County Council to consider the demolition of all or part of the providers buildings, in order to facilitate road widening works coupled

with pedestrian amenity along with provision of a town centre focal point. This will tie in with the Overall Longford Connected Plan.

Response:

We will consider this option in conjunction with the overall Camlin Quarter Plan.

9. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

(i) TO NOTE PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Noted

(ii) TO NOTE MINUTES OF THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT SPC MEETING HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2024

Noted

(iii) NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Sean Mimmagh and seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill

I call on Longford County Council to establish and implement a structured maintenance program for walkways throughout County Longford to ensure their safety, accessibility, and long-term sustainability.

This program should include regular inspections, repairs, and upgrades as necessary to enhance the usability of walkways for residents and visitors alike.

Furthermore, adequate budgetary provisions should be allocated to support this initiative, ensuring these walkways remain in optimal condition.

Response:

Following Storm Éowyn, significant damage was experienced in the County's walkways. The Roads team began works on clearing fallen trees and debris from these once the roads were cleared. Surfaces in certain areas have been damaged.

As part of the 2025 budgetary process, the Elected Members allocated funding for the maintenance and upkeep of walkways and greenways in the County. As this funding is limited (€25k per MD), works will have to be prioritised and included in the programme of works for the Area teams. The teams will also liaise with Coillte in relation to walks under their control. The Regeneration Team have successfully applied for funding for the upkeep and upgrade of certain walkways under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS). This work will be carried out in collaboration with the Area teams.

The introduction of Community Wardens in the Environment section will support Longford Council's inspection programme.

It is also hoped that the Elected Members will provide additional funding as part of the budgetary process for 2026.

It was agreed to write to Bord Na Mona to discuss the maintenance of these walkways.

10. GENERAL

(i) NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Seamus Butler and seconded by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi

I call on Longford County Council to write to Minister Darragh O'Brien at the Department of Climate, Environment & Energy and Department of Transport, to request that he instructs the ESB to permit owners of solar panels to switch over to exclusive solar power when power cuts occur. It is understood that under current regulations that is not permitted.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to the Minister for the Department of Climate, Environment & Energy and Minister for Transport in relation to the above Notice of Motion.

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Martin Monaghan and seconded by Councillor Mark Casey

I call on Longford County Council to provide a train service for Longford to Sligo and vice versa – I seek the support of the members on calling on Iarnród Éireann and the NTA to examine the possibility of providing a morning and evening commuter train service Monday to Friday between Longford and Sligo, to cater for the large number of people who work, attend college, hospital appointments etc., on a daily basis. There is a demand for such a service and I feel that it would be extensively used and would be welcomed by the communities who live along or close to the Dublin – Sligo line.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to Iarnród Éireann and NTA in relation to the above Notice of Motion. We will request an early commuter service to provide transport for college students and workers which currently is not provided for by Iarnród Éireann.

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Martin Monaghan and seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler

I call on Longford County Council to reintroduce the roadside pumps – in light of the recent water outages due to ESB issues, I am calling on Longford County Council to bring a programme of works to reinstate/refurbish/reintroduce the usage of our roadside water pumps and

wells. These will then form a part of an emergency plan in the event of future water outages in our rural areas.

Response:

The supply of water is provided for by Uisce Éirenn. This matter should be referred to Uisce Éireann as they are the water authority.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- (i) Correspondence from Roscommon County Council regarding power lines in forestry
Noted
- (ii) Correspondence from Roscommon County Council regarding landowners incentives
Noted
- (iii) Correspondence from Roscommon County Council regarding Government phone network access
Noted
- (iv) Correspondence from Roscommon County Council regarding exam time for people with learning difficulties
Noted
- (v) Correspondence from Donegal County Council regarding dog control
Noted
- (vi) Correspondence from Sligo County Council regarding VAT increase on electricity costs
Noted
- (vii) Correspondence from South Dublin County Council regarding Fossil Fuel
Noted

12. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Longford County Council will take place on Wednesday, 09 April 2025 at 3:30pm in the Council Chamber.

Signed: Lorraine McKee

Lorraine McKee
Meetings Administrator

Confirmed and adopted at Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 09 April 2025.

Signed: Mark Ryan

Cathaoirleach