

**Minutes of Meeting of Longford County Council
held in the Council Chamber and via Microsoft Teams on
Wednesday, 10 September 2025 at 4pm**

PRESIDING: Councillor Garry Murtagh

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Paul Ross, Niall Gannon, Peggy Nolan, Gerry Hagan, Padraig McNamara, Martin Skelly, Colin Dalton, Seamus Butler, Uruemu Adejinmi, Mick Cahill, Pat O'Toole, Sean Mimnagh, Kevin Hussey, Martin Monaghan, David Cassidy, Turlough McGovern, Mark Casey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. Paddy Mahon, Chief Executive
Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services
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

APOLOGIES: None

A/MEETINGS

ADMINISTRATOR: Mr. Gerard Dennigan

1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- (i) On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler seconded by Councillor Paul Ross the minutes of the monthly meeting of Longford County Council held on 9 July 2025, as circulated, were confirmed, and adopted.
- (ii) On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor Pat O'Toole the minutes of the Special meeting of Longford County Council held on 23 July 2025, as circulated, were confirmed, and adopted.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

Councillor Padraig McNamara declared an interest in relation to his Notice of motion, noting that he is currently employed by An Post.

4. MANAGEMENT REPORT

The members noted the Management report.

Councillor Pat O'Toole noted and acknowledged the excellent works completed by the Regeneration team to enhance access to the Newcastle Woods trail network. The completed works represent an improvement in recreational infrastructure in South Longford and ensuring that the Newcastle Woods trail remains a high-quality.

Councillor Colin Dalton requested that an update would be provided to the Elected members on regeneration projects throughout the County.

Councillor Peggy Nolan requested that Longford County Council issue correspondence to Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment, Darragh O'Brien TD, regarding the retrofitting programme, seeking an update on the Council's request for reimbursement of costs and requesting an urgent meeting with the Minister. This proposal was proposed by Councillor Peggy Nolan and seconded by Councillor Kevin Hussey.

Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi expressed her concern at the number of falling Broadband poles throughout the County and the duration it is taking National Broadband Ireland (NBI) to replace them.

Councillor Seamus butler raised concerns regarding the storm water management system in Connolly Barracks. John Brannigan explained that any costs in addressing the issues would be covered under the recently announced THRIVE funding.

5. TO NOTE ADOPTED MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MEETING HELD ON 11 June 2025

Noted

6. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (i) **Section 183 – Substation at Granada View, Granard, Co. Longford**
On the proposal of Councillor Paul Ross, seconded by Councillor Padraig McNamara, Section 183 - Section 183 – Substation at Granada View, Granard, Co. Longford was approved.

(ii) Section 183 – 53 The Demesne, Longford

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan, seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler, Section 183 – 53 The Demesne, Longford was approved.

(iii) Notice of Motions

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Pat O'Toole and seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler

I call on Longford County Council to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne, requesting that clear guidelines are issued in relation to proof of ownership requirements for Housing Adaption grants. It seems there is no consistency nationally and of cases elderly people have opted to pass up on the grant and much needed improvement works as the legal costs involved in regularising ownership is prohibitive.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to the Minister for Housing James Browne TD and the Department of Housing outlining the request as outlined in the Notice of Motion.

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(i) Part VIII No. 132 Proposed storm water management system to facilitate the re-development of the former Officers Building, Abbeycartron, Longford.

On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler, seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan, Part VIII No. 132 Proposed storm water management system to facilitate the re-development of the former Officers Building, Abbeycartron, Longford was approved.

(ii) Part VIII No. 133 Re-development of the former Longford Post Office, 43 Main Street, Longford

(iii) On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler, seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan, Part VIII No. 133 Re-development of the former Longford Post Office, 43 Main Street, Longford was approved.

(iv) Part VIII No. 131 Ballymahon Pobal le Cheile Regeneration Project

On the proposal of Councillor Pat O'Toole, seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill, Part VIII No. 131 Ballymahon Pobal le Cheile Regeneration Project was approved.

8. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

(i) To note planning applications received -Noted

(ii) Cemetery Bye-Laws 2025

Richard Smith, Senior Executive Officer introduced the draft Cemetery Bye-Laws 2025. He outlined the process which was undertaken in the development of the Bye-Laws including the public consultation. He outlined the feedback from the consultation process and addressed questions from the Elected Members. The draft Cemetery Bye-Laws 2025 were considered by the Physical Development SPC in July 2025 and were unanimously approved and recommended for consideration at the September Corporate Policy Group meeting. Following unanimous approval and recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group, the draft Bye-Laws, together with the Chief Executive report, were presented to the Council for consideration. The Bye-Laws were welcomed by the Elected Members. Councillor Peggy Nolan proposed and Councillor Pat O'Toole seconded the proposed Bye-Laws, and they were unanimously adopted by the Elected Members. It was agreed that the Bye-Laws will come into effect three months from the date of the meeting.

During Elected Members commentary on the Cemetery Bye Laws, Cllr. Mark Casey cited the benefit of restricting plastic, burial flower arrangements in the interest of more sustainable waste generation.

Richard Smith, Senior Executive Officer supported the reasoning and had earlier briefed the Elected Members on the Environment Section's commitment to piloting a memorial flower compost area in Ballymacormack Cemetery where waste segregation will apply, complementary to the bye law provision.

(iii) Policy and Procedure for Abandoned Vehicles

Richard Smith, Senior Executive Officer introduced the draft Policy and Procedure for Abandoned Vehicles. He addressed questions from the Elected Members. The draft Policy and Procedure for Abandoned Vehicles was considered by the Physical Development SPC in July 2025 and was unanimously approved and recommended for consideration at the September Corporate Policy Group meeting. Following unanimous approval and recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group, the draft policy was presented to the Council for consideration. The policy and procedure were welcomed by the Elected Members. Councillor Paul Ross proposed and Councillor Mark Casey seconded the proposed policy, and it was unanimously adopted by the Elected Members. It was agreed that the policy will come into immediate effect.

(iv) Litter Management Plan 2025-2027

Richard Smith, Senior Executive Officer introduced the draft Litter Management Plan 2025 – 2027. He outlined the process which was undertaken in the development of the plan including the public consultation. He outlined the feedback from the consultation process and addressed questions from the Elected Members. The draft Litter Management Plan 2025 - 2027 was considered by the Physical Development SPC in July 2025 and was unanimously approved and recommended for consideration at the September Corporate Policy Group meeting. Following unanimous approval and recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group, the draft plan, together with the Chief Executive report, was presented to the Council for consideration. The plan was welcomed by the Elected Members. Councillor Paul Ross proposed and Councillor Seamus Butler seconded the proposed plan, and it was unanimously adopted by the Elected Members.

(v) Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030

Richard Smith, Senior Executive Officer introduced the draft Biodiversity Action Plan 2025 – 2030. He outlined the process which was undertaken in the development of the plan including the public consultation. He outlined the feedback from the consultation process and together with Adam Mulvihill, Biodiversity Officer, addressed questions from the Elected Members. The draft Biodiversity Action Plan 2025 – 2030 was considered by the Corporate Policy Group and was unanimously approved and recommended for consideration and adoption at the September Council meeting. The draft plan, together with the Chief Executive report, was presented to the Council for consideration. The plan was welcomed by the Elected Members. Councillor Peggy Nolan proposed and Councillor Paul Ross seconded the proposed plan, and it was unanimously adopted by the Elected Members.

It was noted that the Minister for Nature, Heritage and Biodiversity – Christopher O’Sullivan TD will be visiting Edgeworthstown Library on the 25 September to launch the Biodiversity Action Plan. As a first action of the plan, the Longford Birding Backpacks will also be launched. This is a cross-council initiative between Libraries, Heritage, and Environment in partnership with Birdwatch Ireland and funded by the Local Biodiversity Action Fund, NPWS, and Longford County Council.

Paddy Mahon and Barbara Heslin acknowledged the work of the Environment team in bringing the Cemetery Bye-Laws 2025, Policy and Procedure for Abandoned Vehicles, Litter Management Plan, and Biodiversity Action Plan to the Council for consideration and adoption. They thanked Councillor Turlough McGovern, chair of the Physical Development SPC, and members of the SPC for their guidance and support in the development process.

(vi) Notice of Motions

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Sean Mimmagh and seconded by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi

I am calling on Longford County Council to write to the Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment, Darragh O'Brien TD, requesting that national guidelines be developed and implemented for the application, planning, and development of solar farms and wind turbines. These guidelines should promote consistency, transparency, comprehensive environmental assessment, robust community consultation, and protection of agricultural and ecological interests across Ireland.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to the Climate, Energy and the Environment, Darragh O'Brien TD outlining the request as outlined in the Notice of Motion.

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Pat O'Toole and seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill

I call on the Minister for Housing James Browne T.D and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to relax the current planning rules regarding so-called ribbon developments of small numbers of individual houses along national, regional, and rural roads.

Response:

Longford County Council will write to the Minister for Housing James Browne TD and the Department of Housing outlining the request as outlined in the Notice of Motion.

Longford County Council's adopted County Development Plan reflects the guidelines in the Department's Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued in April 2005. The County Development Plan provides for the following with regards to ribbon development.

CPO 4.32: Discourage ribbon development (defined as five or more houses alongside 250 metres of road frontage). The Council will assess whether a given proposal will exacerbate such ribbon development, having regard to the following:

- a) The type of rural area and circumstances of the applicant.
- b) The degree to which the proposal might be considered infill development.

- c) The degree to which existing ribbon development would coalesce as a result of the proposed development.
- d) Local circumstances, including the planning history of the area and development pressures. Notwithstanding the above, special regard will be given to the circumstances of immediate family members of a landowner on single infill sites in a line of existing dwellings with 5 or more houses along a 250 metres of road frontage.

9. THE UKRAINIAN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, INTEGRATION, ENTERPRISE AND TOURISM

(i) Notice of Motion

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Sean Mimmagh and seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler

I call on Longford County Council to engage with the Minister for Climate, Environment, Energy and Transport, Darragh O'Brien, to support the establishment of a taskforce including representatives from the Lanesboro/Ballyleague Collaborative Group, ESB, and Bord na Móna. As future plans for the area progress, it is essential that local community is directly involved and positioned to benefit from any spinoffs or collaborative opportunities that arise.

Response:

Longford County Council continues to work closely with all stakeholder groups interested in delivering community and economic benefits to Lanesboro. It is aware of the unique challenges presented by the closure of the ESB power station and the cessation of peat harvesting and it will write to Minister O'Brien to ask him to consider the establishment of some form of task force that will allow for better collaboration between all interested parties.

10. GENERAL

(i) Notice of Motions

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Padraig McNamara and seconded by Councillor Pat O'Toole

I call on Longford County Council to write to Minister Patrick O'Donovan requesting the Government to commit to investing €15 million annually in the Irish Post Office Network, given its central role in delivering essential public services and providing critical financial supports to small businesses. With 540 Post Offices located in areas without a bank within 5km radius, the Network is a lifeline for communities, particularly in rural Ireland, and its sustainability is vital for local economies, social inclusion, and community wellbeing.

Response:

Longford County Council to write to Minister Patrick O'Donovan outlining the request as outlined in the Notice of Motion.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- (i) Correspondence from Uisce Éireann
- (ii) Resolution from Waterford County Council
- (iii) Notice of Motion from June meeting of Wexford County Council
- (iv) Resolution from Clare County Council
- (v) Resolution from Galway County Council (Minister for Health)
- (vi) Resolution from Galway County Council (HSE)
- (vii) Correspondence from Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- (viii) Resolution from Limerick City & County Council
- (ix) Correspondence from Failte Ireland regarding EU Just Transition Extension
- (x) Correspondence from EMRA regarding EU Just Transition Extension

The members unanimously noted the correspondence received from EMRA in relation to EU Just Transition Funding which clearly outlines, extensions beyond the originally approved timelines are not possible.

- (xi) Response from Minister Browne
- (xii) Resolution from Galway City Council
- (xiii) Resolution from Limerick City and County Council – Ribbon Development Rules
- (xiv) Resolution from Limerick City and County Council – Link to Community Welfare Support
- (xv) Resolution from Offaly County Council
- (xvi) Resolution from Donegal County Council – National Affordable Housing Schemes
- (xvii) Resolution from Donegal County Council – Socio-Economic Status
- (xviii) Correspondence from HSE

12. TRAINING FOR APPROVAL

Noted

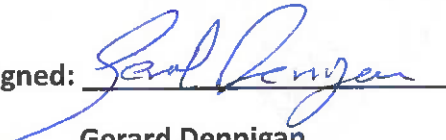
13. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

None

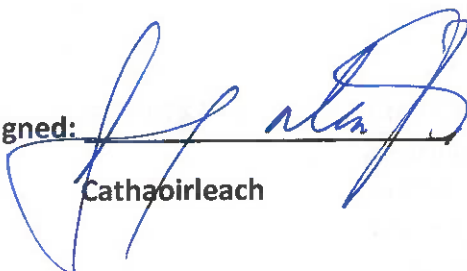
14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Longford County Council will take place on Wednesday, 8 October 2025 at 4pm in the Council Chamber.

Cathaoirleach Garry Murtagh informed the members that a Special Meeting of Longford County Council will take place on Monday, 15th September at 11:00 a.m. Potential presidential candidates will be invited to attend this meeting.

Signed: 
Gerard Dennigan
A/Meetings Administrator

Confirmed and adopted at Meeting of Longford County Council held on 8 October 2025

Signed: 
Cathaoirleach