

**LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LONGFOIRT**

**Minutes of February Monthly Meeting of Longford County Council  
held in the Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford on  
Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 4.00 p.m.**

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**PRESIDING:** Councillor Mick Cahill, Cathaoirleach.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors – Paraic Brady, John Browne, Seamus Butler, Micheál Carrigy, Mark Casey, John Duffy, Gerard Farrell, Luie McEntire, Martin Mulleady, Colm Murray, Peggy Nolan, Pat O’Toole, P.J. Reilly, Paul Ross, Mae Sexton and Gerry Warnock.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. Paddy Mahon, Chief Executive  
Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services.  
Mr. John Brannigan, Director of Services.  
Mr. John McKeon, Head of Finance.

**APOLOGY:** Councillor Padraig Loughrey.

**MEETINGS**  
**ADMINISTRATOR:** Ms. Anne Lee.

**Fire in John V. Donoghues Public House in Granard.**

Councillor P.J. Reilly complimented the Fire Service and Emergency Services for their quick intervention in bringing a fire in John V. Donoghues’s Public House in Granard under control on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES.**

On the proposal of Councillor S. Butler seconded by Councillor C. Murray, the Minutes of Finance Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 were confirmed and adopted.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES.**

In reply to a query from Councillor P. Brady, Mr. P. Mahon, Chief Executive, outlined details of Standing Order No. 8 in relation to the protocol for Committee Meetings -

8. The Council may convene an "In Committee" Meeting or may hold a part of any Meeting "In Committee" where it is determined by resolution of the Council that it is appropriate to do so. No member of the public or media representative may be present at an "In Committee" Meeting or that portion of a Meeting being held in Committee.

### **CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MINUTES.**

The adopted Minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meetings held on the 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2016 as circulated, were noted.

### **CHIEF EXECUTIVE ORDERS.**

The Chief Executive Orders, which had been circulated, were noted.

### **MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT.**

The Monthly Management Report, as circulated with the Agenda, was noted.

### **Appointment of Architect.**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Departmental sanction which has been received for the appointment of an Architect, to support the Planning Section, in accordance with the Council's Workforce Plan.

### **Northern Quarter.**

In reply to a query from Councillor C. Murray regarding an update on the Northern Quarter, B. Heslin stated that a meeting scheduled for the 3<sup>rd</sup> February with NAMA and the receivers had to be rescheduled to later in the month. An update will be given at the March Meeting.

### **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING, HUMAN RESOURCES & CORPORATE SERVICES, CULTURAL & RECREATIONAL SERVICES.**

### **Planning Applications.**

The list of Planning Applications received since the last meeting of the Council was submitted and noted.

### **Notice of Motion.**

#### **Digital Hub.**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor M. Carrigy and seconded by Councillor S. Butler -

“I call on Longford County Council to provide an Enterprise and Collaborative Space in Longford Town to act as a Digital Hub with all the associated services - High Speed Broadband etc. to attract new business into the town and create a vibrant environment for start up and established businesses to thrive.”

Barbara welcomed the Notice of Motion and said that it was timely in the context of updating the proposal and business plan for a Creative and Innovative Space in Longford Town. This project was previously submitted for REDZ funding in 2016. The current proposal incorporates an innovation based incubator space, digital hub, hot desking and creative arts and exhibition space. Following feedback received on the proposal the Council must now further develop the business plan and address sustainability and viability of the project, demand for the space, funding opportunities and corporate and management structures. Longford County Council will continue to work with and consult with the relevant stakeholders to ensure the proposal is ready for future funding streams.

In a reply to Mae, Barbara confirmed that this project will be led by Longford County Council, in consultation with and support of the relevant stakeholders. Councillor Sexton asked that the Innovation and Digital Hub be included on the Agenda for the Longford Municipal District meeting to be held on 22nd March.

Mae Sexton suggested that all six members of Longford Municipal District be represented on the Board of any new company set up to work on the project and this was supported by Gerry Warnock. The Executive undertook to revert to the Council once the business plan and proposal for the governance structure is further developed. Mae asked that it be recorded in the Minutes that it was her view that Councillors should not be outnumbered by external stakeholders on the Board of any new company set up to work on the project.

A call for European Funding for free Wi-Fi, WiFi4EU, is expected later this year and Longford County Council will also apply for funding under this new initiative.

### **HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES.**

#### **Recommendation from Granard Municipal District.**

The following recommendation from Granard Municipal District was proposed by Councillor P. Brady and seconded by Councillor P.J. Reilly -

“That Longford County Council writes to the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport requesting additional funding for Local Improvement Schemes.”

It was further agreed that the correspondence be copied to Mr. Pascal Donohoe, T.D., Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and to the Association of Irish Local Government (A.I.L.G)

Councillor M. Carrigy proposed and Councillor P. Brady seconded that any funding received be divided in accordance with the percentage of outstanding schemes in each Municipal District. Councillor M. Casey requested that it be recorded in the Minute of the meeting his request that any funding received be allocated equally between the three Municipal Districts.

J. Brannigan stated that Longford County Council have a total of 75 applications for Local Improvement Schemes (65 North Area / 9 South Area / 1 Mid). The area staff are costing each scheme. The 2017 Roads Allocation does not provide a separate allocation for LIS. The Council will prepare a submission under CLAR when the Scheme is reopened and write to the Minister.

### **Notice of Motion.**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor M. Carrigy and seconded by Councillor P.J. Reilly -

“I call on the Minister for Health to provide extra funding for the provision of long-term housing for people with special needs.”

On the proposal of Councillor P. O’Toole seconded by Councillor M. Carrigy, it was agreed that the Motion be amended as follows -

“ I call on the Minister for Housing to provide extra funding for the provision of long-term housing for people with special needs, and I call on the Health Service Executive to provide the matching revenue funding that will be required to staff whatever additional housing units that are provided.”

J. Brannigan stated that the Housing (Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with Disability) Regulations 2007 and Amended Regulations 2014 provide for the payment of grants based on income thresholds to people with a disability. National guidelines for the assessment and allocation process for housing provision for people with a disability are currently in draft format, Submissions by 16th March. The Housing Action plan has a number of specific actions relating to housing for people with a disability. These include increasing the target of the Housing Adaptation Grant drawdown to 10,000 homes in 2017 (up from 8,000 in 2016) and will streamline the application process and extending the timeframe of the National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities (2011-2016) to continue delivery on its aims. Addressing the issue requires interagency cooperation to ensure that the correct care package is in place. Longford County Council will make funding application to the Department for specific projects as they arise.

### **FINANCE & INFORMATION SYSTEMS.**

#### **Public Liability Claims.**

It was noted that six Public Liability Claims were received during January 2016.

#### **Longford County Council’s Performance Indicators 2015.**

Longford County Council’s Performance Indicators 2015, as circulated, were noted.

**Transfer of amounts to Specified Revenue Reserves as part of Annual Financial Statement 2016.**

On the proposal of Councillor S. Butler seconded by Councillor M. Carrigy, it was unanimously agreed to the transfer of amounts to Specified Revenue Reserves as part of Annual Financial Statement 2016, as circulated.

**Notice of Motion.**

**Local Property Tax - Payment Bands.**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor G. Farrell and seconded by Councillor M. Carrigy -

“I call on Longford County Council to write to the Department of the Environment to consider re-adjusting the payment bands on property tax post 2019 to take into consideration rising house prices. I think there should be a middle band inserted.

There is too big of a jump between the low band and the high band. Pensioners living on their own in old houses should also be given some consideration with a financial incentive.”

It was agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Department of the Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government outlining the details of Councillor Farrell’s motion.

**GENERAL.**

**Notice of Motion.**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor M. Carrigy and seconded by Councillor P. Ross –

“I call on the Minister for Agriculture to organise the immediate payment of all GLAS monies due to farmers.”

It was agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of Agriculture and the Marine regarding this issue.

**Correspondence.**

Letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 received from the Office of the Minister for Housing in relation to backyard services was noted. Councillor Pat O’Toole stated that the response received is not acceptable.

Letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017 received from the Office of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to the Heritage Bill 2016 was noted.

**A.O.B.**

**Commercial Rates.**

On the proposal of Councillor P.J. Reilly seconded by Councillor P. Nolan, it was agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Minister for Finance requesting that the valuation legislation be reviewed.

**CONFERENCES.**

Report from Corporate Policy Group was noted.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: Anne Lee  
Anne Lee,  
Meetings Administrator.

Confirmed and adopted at Monthly Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Signed: P. Cahill  
Cathaoirleach.