

**Minutes of Meeting of Longford County Council**

**held via Microsoft Teams on**

**Wednesday, 13 April 2022 at 3pm**

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**PRESIDING**: Councillor Peggy Nolan, Cathaoirleach

**MEMBERS PRESENT**: Councillors –John Browne, Seamus Butler, Mick Cahill, Colin Dalton, PJ Reilly, Gerard Hagan, Martin Monaghan, Paul Ross, Pat O’Toole, Colm Murray, Garry Murtagh, Mark Casey, Turlough Mc Govern, Paraic Brady and Gerry Warnock.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**  Mr. Paddy Mahon, Chief Executive

Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services

Mr. John Brannigan, Director of Services

Ms. Samantha Healy, Director of Services

Ms. Fema Farrell, A/ Head of Finance/Director of Services

**APOLOGIES:** Mr. John McKeon, Head of Finance/Director of Services

Councillors, Gerard Farrell and Uruemu Adejinmi

**MEETINGS**

**ADMINISTRATOR**: Ann Marie Mc Keon

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the proposal of Councillor John Browne seconded by Councillor Pat O’Toole the Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 9 March 2022, as circulated, were confirmed and adopted.

On the proposal of Councillor Pat O’Toole seconded by Councillor Martin Monaghan the Minutes of Committee Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 9 March 2022, as circulated, were confirmed and adopted.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

None.

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

None.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

The Chief Executive Report, as circulated, was noted. Councillor Seamus Butler requested that the spelling of “Breaden’s Lane” on page 21 be corrected.

Councillor John Browne noted the receipts for motor tax were down in 2021 (page 77), Acting Head of Finance, Fema Flanagan explained that the number of on-line transactions had increased, and these are not handled by the Longford office.

Councillor Gerry Warnock sought clarification on affordable housing and the recent reports on social media. Director of Services, John Brannigan explained to the elected members that twelve local authorities don’t have access to affordable housing, however, if a town has a population greater than 10,000 then the local authority can make a submission to the department. KPMG are currently working on this submission.

Councillor Gerry Warnock acknowledged the work undertaken by Director of Services, John Brannigan in pursing this issue with the Department.

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MEETING HELD ON THE 8 FEBRUARY 2022 - CIRCULATED**

The adopted Minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on the 8 February 2022, as circulated, were noted.

**COMMUNITY, CORPORATE AND ENTERPRISE**

**Consideration of Draft Annual Report 2021 prepared in accordance with section**

**221 of the Local Government Action 2001 as amended – as circulated**

The Draft Annual Report 2020 as circulated was noted. The Members complemented the report. Barbara Heslin informed the members that a more consolidated report will be presented to the members at the June meeting. Once approved it will be published and translated into Irish.

**Consideration of amendments to Draft Civic Protocols December 2016 – as circulated**

On the proposal of Councillor Colm Murray, seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler, the

members unanimously agreed to adopt the Civic Protocols as circulated.

**Consideration of establishment of Protocols and Procedure Committee and nominations**

**to this committee**

On the proposal of Councillor Colm Murray, seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill, the members unanimously agreed to establish a Protocol and Procedure Committee consisting of the Cathaoirleach of the County Council and representatives from the political parties. The following membership was agreed:

* Cathaoirleach – Councillor Peggy Nolan
* Councillor Colm Murray
* Councillor Mick Cahill
* Councillor Gerry Warnock

It was also agreed that if an existing member is elected Cathaoirleach, then the relevant political part can nominate a new Elected Member to the Committee. Meeting will be arranged on a need’s basis.

**Modernisation of the Electoral Registration Process Update**

Senior Executive Officer, Nora O’Farrell updated the elected members on the Electoral Reform Bill 2022 published in March 2022: -

* Establishment of an independent Electoral Commission
* New Modernised arrangements for Electoral Registration
* Amendments to facilitate voting when COVID-19 type restrictions are in place
* Regulation of online political advertisement
* A move to a continuously updated or 'rolling' electoral register that can be updated at any time of year
* Transparent data sharing provisions to enable basic data checks to improve the accuracy and integrity of the register
* Name, Address, Eircode, DOB and PPSN explicitly included on forms
* Introduction of the use of PPSNs in the process
* An oversight function in respect of the register for the Electoral Commission
* Annual reporting by registration authorities to the Electoral Commission
* A designated registration authority to manage and maintain a shared database
* Anonymous registration in certain limited cases for persons whose safety may be at risk
* Broader definition of persons with illness or disability by removing word ‘physical
* Pending electors list for persons aged 16 and 17 – list will not be published
* Provide for the extension of postal voter categories to include special voters in certain circumstances
* Current law applies till passage and commencement complete
* Changes are to the processes not eligibility
* Register in force on commencement will remain in force for update
* A new annual cycle - more flexible for elector
* Identity data checks will form a critical part of the process for integrity and accuracy
* Elector Applications all have similar process
* Application to Registration Authority > decision > appeal to County Registrar if refused

The elected members complimented Nora on the presentation and Nora responded to the

questions raised by the elected members.

**PLANNING AND PROJECT DELIVERY**

**Planning Applications**

The list of Planning Applications received since last meeting of the Council were noted.

**Consideration of the disposal of a strip of land at Townspark, Longford in accordance**

**With the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 29**

**March 2022**

On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler, seconded by Councillor John Browne, the

members unanimously agreed to dispose of a strip of land at Townspark, Longford in

accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 29

March 2022.

**The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi. As provided for in the Standing Order 33 the Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Seamus Butler on behalf of Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi and seconded by Councillor Martin Monaghan -**

**“**I call on Longford County Council to introduce a self-help scheme for tenants of Longford

County Council houses. Such a scheme will enable Council tenants carry out

repairs/replacement works in their council house once their application is approved”.

**Response**

Longford County Council does not provide this scheme, our improvements are prioritised through disabled persons grant and the energy retrofit programme. As and when we return vacant units to use, we might also replace windows and doors where necessary when bringing the property up to standard as part of our works on voids and casual vacancies.

Councillor Butler informed the meeting that Councillor Adejinmi had confirmed that she was happy with the response received prior to the meeting.

**GENERAL**

Cathaoirleach Councillor Peggy Nolan explained to the elected members that she was in receipt of an urgent Notice of Motion from Councillor Colm Murray. The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the notice of motion complied with Standing Order 25 and was received by her and the Meetings Administrator before 12 noon.

With the unanimous agreement of the Elected Members present it was agreed to consider the Notice of Motion.

**The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Colm Murray and seconded by Councillor Paraic Brady -**

"I call on Longford County Council to write to the leaders of the three Government parties demanding that Ministerial regulations which propose to ban the sale of turf ARE NOT enacted by the Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan."

All the elected members supported this notice of motion and unanimously agreed that a letter be sent by post to the leaders of the three Government parties proposing that they do not enact the ban on the sale of turf.

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

“I am calling on Longford County Council to engage and work with the other stakeholder namely LWETB on the Connolly Barracks site to work in delivering a state-of-the-art apprenticeship centre in the heart of Ireland”.

The elected members unanimously agreed to write to the LWETB and Minister Simon Harris with regard to their proposal.

**The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Paraic Brady and seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan -**

“I call on the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee to carry out an immediate review of the Free Legal Aid System”.

The elected members unanimously agreed to write to Minister Helen McEntee.

**TRAINING**

Report from the CPG on training was noted.

**SYMPATHY**

Votes of sympathy to be emailed to the meetings administrator.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Ann Marie Mc Keon**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ann Marie Mc Keon**

**Meetings Administrator.**

**Confirmed and adopted at Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 11 May 2022.**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Cathaoirleach.**

