

**Minutes of Meeting of Longford County Council**

**held via Microsoft Teams on**

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

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**PRESIDING**: Councillor Turlough Mc Govern, Cathaoirleach

**MEMBERS PRESENT**: Councillors –John Browne, Seamus Butler, Mick Cahill, Colin Dalton, PJ Reilly, Gerry Hagan, Martin Monaghan, Paul Ross, Pat O’Toole, Colm Murray, Garry Murtagh, Peggy Nolan, Gerry Warnock, Gerard Farrell, Uruemu Adejinmi and Paraic Brady

**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 Mark Casey

**MEETINGS**

**ADMINISTRATOR**: Ann Marie Mc Keon

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler the Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 8 June 2022, as circulated, were confirmed and adopted.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

Councillor Seamus Butler noted the Corporate Policy Group minutes in April where Councillor Nolan’s proposals for a review of the existing twinning agreements and development of a policy and protocol for considering new agreements was agreed by the CPG. The CPG also agreed that no new twinning agreements would be considered or entered into until this process is completed. Seamus stated that he was disappointed that other twinning groups were proceeding with events and visits but that Longford twinning with Noyal Châtillon Sur Seiche was not active as there is no committee in place.

Director of Services, Barbara Heslin confirmed that the review had commenced and is ongoing and that this is an agenda item for both the Placemaking and Governance Strategic Policy Committee. Barbara explained to the meeting that, unlike Longford, Ballymahon, Ballinamuck and Granard town twinnings are community led. There are active committees in place who take responsibility for organising events and building relationships with their twinning partners. These committees are financially supported through the General Municipal Allocations in Ballymahon and Granard Municipal Districts.

Barbara explained that the Council had expressed its continued support for the links which have been created over the years between Longford Town and Noyal Châtillon Sur Seiche. Barbara suggested that Longford Municipal District support the establishment of a committee to foster, strengthen and reenergise this valued friendship. Councillors Peggy Nolan and Gerry Hagan agreed with this proposal. Councillor Gerry Hagan said that, as Cathaoirleach of Longford Municipal District, he would set about establishing a committee with representation from business, community and LMD Elected Members.

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

None.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Noted.

Cathaoirleach Turlough Mc Govern welcomed the report and requested an update on Colmcille Terrace. Director of Service John Brannigan confirmed that a funding application was submitted in early June and that information received from the Department would now be reviewed. Meetings with the Housing Body and the residents would then be scheduled.

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MEETING HELD ON THE 10 MAY 2022 - CIRCULATED**

The adopted Minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on the 10 May 2022, as circulated, were noted.

**INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND INNOVATION**

**Rural Water Multi-Annual Programme 2022-2025**

Administrative Officer Suzanne Duffy briefed the elected members on the Rural Water Multi-Annual Programme 2022-2025 and confirmed that this document covers a range of measures to improve the quality, reliability and efficiency of rural water services infrastructure within Longford County Council and we currently have two existing group water schemes.

Suzanne covered the following:

* New Framework
* Capital funding provided for under seven measures
* Existing schemes should consider measures three and five
* New schemes should consider measures four and six
* Applications are for capital works only and must not include any operational or maintenance costs.

The elected members welcomed the presentation and Suzanne replied to the questions raised on new connections and informed the members that any draft bid proposals, for capital works only, should be submitted to [ruralwater@longfordcoo.ie](mailto:ruralwater@longfordcoo.ie) no later than 29 July 2022.

**The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Paul Ross and seconded by Councillor Colm Murray**

“I request that a review of the management of all the roundabouts in our county is

undertaken to bring them up to a standard that reflects the values and positive promotion of our county as they are a shop window to the county”.

**Response**

The management of roundabouts can be put on the Agenda for the October Strategic Infrastructure SPC Meeting for discussion and formulation of a Policy. Issues regarding funding, aesthetics, signage, landscaping, maintenance, etc., to be discussed.

**FINANCE AND IT**

**To note Report of the Local Government Audit Services 2021 – as circulated**

Noted. Questions were raised on the total reserve figure, the unfunded capital balances, and bad debt provision which A/Head of Finance, Fema Flanagan responded to.

Councillor Butler commented that it was a very positive and encouraging report.

**Consideration of Approval of Loan funding of €2,000,000 to part finance various**

**Urban & Rural Regeneration Projects**

On the proposal of Councillor Gerry Warnock, seconded by Councillor Colm Murray the members unanimously approved the Loan funding of €2,000,000 to part finance various Urban and Rural Regeneration Projects.

**Consideration of the disposal of property (shared ownership scheme) at Aughamore,**

**Clonbroney, Ballinalee, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the**

**Local Government Act 2001 as issued on the 29 June 2022**

On the proposal of Councillor John Browne, seconded by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi the members unanimously agreed to the disposal of property (shared ownership scheme) at Aughamore, Clonbroney, Ballinalee, Longford in accordance with the terms of section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as issued on the 29 June 2022.

**PLANNING AND PROJECT DELIVERY**

**Planning Applications**

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

**Approval to the appointment of Mr. Enda Mc Manus Revamp to replace Michael**

**Reilly on the Climate Action and Planning Strategic Policy Committee**

On the proposal of Councillor Garry Murtagh, seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler the members unanimously agreed the appointment of Enda Mc Manus Revamp to replace Michael Reilly on the Climate Action and Planning Strategic Policy Committee.

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

That due to the recently published 2022 Census information that Co Longford has increased

its population by 14% since 2016, I propose that we revisit our current Co Development Plan

in regard residential housing zones and any other parameters that are related to population

growth’

**Response**

**Longford’s population has increased by over 50% since the 1996 census and 14.1% since 2021.** This is phenomenal growth of 50% in 25 years, is without precedence and a great credit to Longford County Council and the people of the County for delivering and assimilating this increase while also maintaining the Counties infrastructure, services, and community spirit.

NATIONAL LEVEL:

The State has recorded the highest population in a Census since 1841 with Longford the fastest growing County in Ireland between 2016 and 2021:

* Population of the State was 5.1 million on 03 April 2022 – an increase of 7.6% from Census 2016. All counties show population growth since 2016
* Longford saw biggest percentage increase **(+14.1%)**, followed by Meath (+12.9%)

LONGFORD COUNTY POPULATION:

The population of Longford grew by 14.1% to 46,634 persons.

Implications for the Longford CDP 2021-2027:

The population forecasts for the County were heavily framed and limited by the identified figures detailed in the National Development Plan – National Planning Framework and the Regional EMRA – RSES. Accordingly, the population figures detailed within the CDP 2021-2027 stated a projected growth to 2027 of 4,927 providing a population estimate of 45,800 persons by 2027. The preliminary outturn figures for the County identify that these projected population figures have been substantially exceeded.

This population growth achievement is ten years earlier than forecast by the National Census Office and the Department of Heritage and Planning. Longford County Council had correctly forecast this growth in advance of the three previous Development Plans but was wrongly advised by the Department to reduce its forecasts.

I have included below tables that are included in the CDP including Table 4.11: NPF Roadmap / RSES population targets to 2026 and 2031 – the latest outturn figure for the County shows that the identified 2031 projections as detailed in the NPF and the RSES have already been exceeded in 2021.

**The County Development Plan**

**Table 4.11: NPF Roadmap / RSES Population Targets to 2026 and 2031**

**(Source:** ***Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework*)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Census 2016 | 2026 NPF Roadmap / RSES Target | 2031 NPF Roadmap / RSES Target | Census 2022 Preliminary Outturn |
| EMRA Region | 2,329,000 | 2,566,500-2,619,000 | 2,668,000-2,740,500 |  |
| Midlands Strategic Planning Area | 292,500 | 318,500-324,500 | 329,500-337,000 |  |
| County Longford | 40,873 | 44,500-45,500 | 46,000-47,000 | **46,634** |

**Table 4.15: Core Strategy**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hierarch Tier & Density | Population 2016 | Population Growth to 2027 | Population 2027 | Census Preliminary Outturn | Identified growth 2016 to 2022 |
| County | 40,873 | +4,927 | 45,800 | 46,634 | 14.1% = 5,761 persons |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

On the basis of the preliminary census outturn figures the population profile as defined in the NPF, RSES and the published Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 the range of plans and documents will need to be revised on the foot of these population figures.

This will ultimately lead to a potential variation of the CDP 2021-2027 given the updated population details. This will then cascade down through the hierarchy framework and ultimately lead to a further review for each of the settlements.

In respect of these revised population figures there will be potential implications in respect of:

* Housing delivery and supply – including demand in respect of new housing, social housing and affordable properties for rent and purchase.
* Economy – jobs and employment opportunities
* Infrastructure – including water supply and wastewater capacity across all settlements in the County
* Social Infrastructure – this ultimately includes reference to the impacts on
* Education and school facilities
* Health including doctors, hospitals, dentists
* Community facilities
* Amenities, parks and open spaces with sports and play facilities including
* Retail and business services

Indeed, it impacts on every facet of our society and all the other necessary services, and as the population figures are defined this will have implications for the emerging Longford town LAP and the associated research documents.

**Review**: The Planning Office has already contacted the Office of the Planning Regulator and the Minister for Heritage and Planning on this issue. Both have agreed that it will be necessary to review the figures but that it must commence at National, then regional level before Local County reviews occur. In addition, it would be beneficial to get the more detailed breakdown into local town and village areas to improve the benefits of a review. The Senior Planner recommend that the Council await more detailed census results and hopefully this time more accurate guidance from the Department before commencing a review of the County Development Plan.

**COMMUNITY, CORPORATE AND ENTERPRISE**

**Approval to the appointment of Ms. Deirdre Orme, nominee of the County Longford**

**Tourism Committee to replace Mr. Bartle D’Arcy as a member of Longford Local**

**Community Development Committee (LCDC)**

On the proposal of Cathaoirleach Councillor Turlough McGovern, seconded by Councillor

Colm Murray the members unanimously agreed to the appointment of Ms. Deirdre Orme to

replace Mr. Bartle D’Arcy as a member of Longford Local Community Development

Committee (LCDC).

**Draft Polling Scheme 2022, Public Consultation**

Councillor Garry Murtagh proposed, and Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded that the polling district of Drumhaldry remain as is.

On the proposal of Uruemu Adejinmi, seconded by Councillor Colm Murray the elected members adopted the Draft Polling Scheme 2022 subject to the proposed change by Councillor Murtagh.

**Appointment of elected representative to LAMA Committee**

It was unanimously agreed to withdraw this item.

**GENERAL**

**The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Paul Ross and seconded by Councillor Colm Murray -**

I call on the Minister for Transport and the NDLS reinstate the walk-in service for people who wish to renew their driving license as the current appointment service is proving very difficult who do not understand the appointment service.

**Response**

The members unanimously agreed to write to Minister for Transport.

**The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Peggy Nolan and seconded by Councillor Colm Murray -**

I call on Longford County Council to write to the HSE requesting that they provide the

upgraded equipment and maintenance budget that was promised to be put in place at the

Radiology Department at Longford Clinic, with immediate effect and that they also provide

an ultra-sound facility to compliment the current maternity service on site.

**Response**

The members unanimously agreed to write to the HSE.

**The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Peggy Nolan and seconded by Councillor Gerry Hagan -**

I call on Longford County Council to write to Iarnród Éireann in the interest of public safety

to ensure the continuous of current services at Longford Railway station and firmly request

the return of full services with immediate effect.

**Response**

The members unanimously agreed to write to Iarnród Éireann.

**Emergency Notice of Motion**

Cathaoirleach Councillor Turlough Mc Govern explained to the elected members that he was in receipt of an Emergency Notice of Motion from Councillors Adejinmi, Butler, Monaghan, Reilly and Cahill. The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the notice of motion complied with Standing Order 25 and was received by him and the Meetings Administrator before 12 noon.

Councillor Adejinmi read the motion.

Councillor Murray stated that over the last number of months we had received a number of emergency motions and that these motions may not always be considered as emergency motions but could just be late notice of motions and that due care should be given to accepting emergency motions.

With the unanimous agreement of the Elected Members present it was agreed to consider the Notice of Motion but that careful consideration must be given in the future as to what is an emergency Notice of Motion. Councillor Colm Murray said that the practice of submitting emergency Notice of Motions must be kept under review.

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

“Calling on the Minister for Social Protection to extend the Back-to-School Clothing and Footwear Scheme to all pupils in primary school and students in secondary school for the current school year to help working families struggling to cover basic expenses access these supports. Families who do not need this support can choose not to apply for the scheme.”

**Response**

The members unanimously agreed to write to the Minister for Social Protection.

**TRAINING**

Report from the Corporate Policy Group on training was noted.

**SYMPATHY**

Councillor Colm Murray proposed, and Councillor Pat O’Toole seconded that a vote of sympathy be extended to Tom Farrell and family, Mullingar on the death of Eoin Farrell.

**Best Wishes**

The elected members extended best wishes to Sinead Hussey on her new role with RTE.

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 14 September 2022.**

**Turlough Mc Govern**

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

**Cathaoirleach.**

