

**Minutes of Meeting of Longford County Council**

**held in the Council Chamber and via Microsoft Teams on**

**Wednesday, 10 May 2023 at 3.30pm**

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

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

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

Ms. Nora O’Farrell, SEO Corporate

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

Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services

Councillor Colm Murray

**MEETINGS**

**ADMINISTRATOR**: Gerard Dennigan

**PRESENTATION ON JUST TRANSITION FROM PADDY MATTHEWS, FÁILTE IRELAND**

Paddy Matthews, Head of Operations Failte Ireland provided a comprehensive presentation on Just Transition to the elected members. The presentation included the following:

* EU Just Transition Fund 2023-2026 Regenerative Tourism Scheme
* Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027
* Chronology of Events
* Just Transition Fund for Ireland – Key Challenges & Policy Response
* Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3
* Actions
* Delivery Partners
* Key Indicators
* Regenerative Tourism Scheme 2023-2027
* Strad 1, Trail Development, Strand 2, Support to Tourism SMEs and Amenity Development, Strand 3, Alternative Low Carbon Accommodation Development, Strand 4, Smart Solutions Supports

On completion of the presentation the membersunanimously acknowledged the presentation delivered. The members raised question in relation to Just Transition to which Paddy Matthews responded to.

Paddy concluded by informing the members that a Just Transition clinic would be taking place in the Longford Arms this evening. The elected members were encouraged to attend.

**FINTAN MCDONALD R.I.P.**

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Turlough Mc Govern proposed and the members unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting for five minutes and a minute’s silence in advance of the recommencement of the meeting as a mark of respect for the late Fintan McDonald, Retained Fire Fighter of Longford County Council. Fintan passed away after a short illness.

Councillor McGovern, Chief Executive Paddy Mahon, Elected Members from all parties extended their sympathies to Fintan’s family and friends, and colleagues in the Fire Service in Ballymahon. They noted his character, courage and respect among his local community in Ballymahon.

1. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan, seconded by Mick Cahill, the Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 12 April 2023, as circulated, were confirmed, and adopted.

1. **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

None.

1. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi declared her interest in a Community Grant Support Scheme application.

1. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Noted.

Councillor Seamus Butler noted the exclusion of the nomination of Longford in the ‘Best Kept Large Town’ category of Tidy Towns competition from the Management Report.

Councillor John Browne raised some questions on the ‘Check the Register’ campaign. He requested a breakdown of the Check the Register application figures stated in the report. Councillor Browne also raised an issue on the ability for registered electors to vote if they do not update their details online.

1. **MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MEETING HELD ON THE 7 MARCH 2023 – AS CIRCULATED**

The adopted Minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on the 7 March 2023, as circulated, were noted.

1. **COMMUNITY, LIBRARY AND CULTURAL SERVICES, CORPORATE AND HUMAN RESOURCES**
2. **Community Grant Support Scheme – Intercultural applications**

Senior Executive Officer Nora O’Farrell updated the members on the Intercultural applications in the Community Grant Support Scheme.

On the proposal of Councillor Seamus Butler, seconded by Councillor Turlough McGovern the members unanimously approved the 2023 Community Grant Support Scheme Intercultural Grants as circulated.

1. **Notice of Motions, submitted by Councillors, as listed hereunder**

**Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Paul Ross and seconded by Councillor Paraic Brady**I call on Longford Co Council to explore the Cultural, Educational and Business links between Co Longford and San Francisco in light of the recent remarks made by Vice President Kamala Harris when she referenced Longford Native Frank McCoppin as the first ever Irish Mayor of a major city in the USA in 1867 in her St Patricks weekend speech.

**Response**

Longford County Council will write to Mayor London Breed of the City and County of San Francisco to ascertain if she is interested in exploring cultural and economic links with County Longford.

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

I call on Longford County Council to have an ISL interpreter present at Council meetings to make meetings accessible to a wider audience viewing the meeting online or in person.

**Response**Since December 2020, the State recognises the right of Irish Sign Language users to use Irish Sign Language as their native language. Consequently, Longford County Council, as a public body, is required to do all that is reasonable to ensure that interpretation into Irish Sign Language is provided to Irish sign language users competent in that language when such persons are seeking to avail of or access statutory entitlements and services.

To date, Longford County Council has not received a request for ISL translation at Council meetings.

The Irish Sign Language Act includes provision that the Minister may make regulations that provide for the procedure in relation to the provision of such services by a public body. To date no such regulations were made.

Section 4 of the Act text also states that provision of or availing of a remote, web-based service shall, if the Irish Sign Language user consents, be sufficient to meet the obligations of a public body under this section.

Following a successful application for funding from the Disability Participation and Awareness Fund 2021, Longford County Council provided employees with an opportunity to learn ISL. The first course commenced in January 2023 and a second commenced in April. This training was delivered by the Irish Deaf Society. The Council will continue to reach out to the Irish Deaf Society and explore how we can work together to ensure accessibility and inclusion for the Irish Deaf community by access to ISL.

**Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi and seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler**I call on Longford County Council to create a County Registry for defibrillators on Longford County Council website and invite Community Groups, Clubs and Local Organisations to register their defibrillators.

**Response**Longford County Council will provide an opportunity to community, sporting, and voluntary groups to register the location of their defibrillators.

An invitation to register their location will be published on our social media platforms and on the Council website. This information will then be published on the Council’s website.

1. **INFRASTRUCTURE, CLIMATE ACTION AND INNOVATION**
2. **To note adopted Minutes of the Climate Action and Planning Strategic Policy Committee held on 1 February 2023 – as circulated**

The adopted Minutes of the Climate Action and Planning Strategic Policy Committee held on 1 February 2023, were noted.

1. **FINANCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**
2. **To note adopted Minutes of the Governance Strategic Policy Committee held on 31 January 2023 – as circulated**

The adopted Minutes of the Governance Strategic Policy Committee held on 31 January 2023, were noted.

1. **To note 2022 Audit Committee Annual Report**

The 2022 Audit Committee Annual Report, as circulated, was noted.

Councillor Seamus Butler commended the work of the Finance section and the Internal Auditor in the results of the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2023.

1. **Consideration of Annual Financial Statement for Year ended 31 December 2022 – amended copy circulated via email**

A/Head of Finance Fema Flanagan gave the members a short presentation on the Annual Financial Statement for 2022.

Fema responded to questions on:

* Status of €2m drawdown previously approved
* Consultancy Fees noted in report

1. **Consideration of Approval of Additional Expenditure under S104(7) of the Local Government Act 2001**

On the proposal of Councillor Paraic Brady, seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan the members unanimously approved additional expenditure under S104(7) of the Local Government Act 2001.

1. **Longford Dream Space Showcase – Update**

Head of IT Danny Lynch and County Librarian Martina Needham updated the members on the Longford Dream Space Showcase on Friday 26 May, in conjunction with Microsoft. Approximately 400 children from twelve National Schools in the county will attend the event, where they will showcase a range of projects they have worked on over the past 12 weeks using the Micro:bits microcontrollers.

The ambitious project was commended by all members, where they mentioned the innovative work of Danny and the IT/Library team on the progress to date and the benefit such projects can provide for primary-age children.

Chief Executive Paddy Mahon acknowledged the presentation delivered by both Danny and Martina and sent his best regards for the Dream Space Showcase event.

1. **HOUSING, PLANNING, REGENERATION AND CAPITAL PROJECTS**
2. **To note Planning Applications received since last meeting of the Council**

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

1. **To note adopted Minutes of meeting of Strategic Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee held on 2 February 2023 – as circulated**

The adopted Minutes of the Strategic infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee held on 2 February 2023, were noted.

1. **Items referred from Strategic Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 17 April 2023:**
2. **Roadside Memorial Policy – as circulated**

The Roadside Memorial Policy referred from the Strategic Infrastructure SPC, as circulated, was noted.

1. **Local Road Safety Plan 2022-2024 – as circulated**

The Local Road Safety Plan 2022-2024 referred from the Strategic Infrastructure SPC, as circulated, was noted.

1. **Consideration of disposal of Property at Gaigue, Ballinamuck, Co. Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 11 April 2023 – as circulated.**

On the proposal of Councillor Paraic Brady, seconded by Councillor Garry Murtagh, the members unanimously agreed to dispose of the Property at Gaigue, Ballinamuck, County Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 11 April 2023.

1. **GENERAL**
2. **Notice of Motions, submitted by Councillors, as listed hereunder**

**Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Garry Murtagh and seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan**Calling on Longford County Council to write to the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, in relation to insufficient support through the HSE for Home Help and its failings to replace HSE retirees. This invaluable service is at breaking point.

**Response**Longford County Council will write to the Minister for Health in relation to insufficient support for Home Help.

1. **Correspondence**
2. Correspondence dated 21 April received from the Department of Agriculture re. Notice of Motion from Councillor Paul Ross regarding stimulus package for the sheep sector, as circulated, was noted.
3. Correspondence dated 20 April received from the Department of Finance re. Notice of Motion from Councillor Garry Murtagh regarding construction workers PAYE, as circulated, was noted.
4. Correspondence dated 19 April received from Office of the Garda Commissioner re. Notice of Motion from Councillor Paul Ross regarding ‘One-for-All’ Garda vetting, as circulated, was noted.
5. Correspondence dated 2 May received from the Department of Rural and Community Development re. Notice of Motion from Councillor Garry Murtagh regarding shop local scheme, as circulated, was noted.
6. **TRAINING**

No training for noting.

**VOTES OF SYMPATHY**

Councillor Turlough McGovern requested a vote of sympathy for Johnny Lynn, Main St, Edgeworthstown – May he Rest in Peace

**CATHAOIRLEACH AWARDS 2023**

Following acceptance of nominations, the date for the 2023 Cathaoirleach Awards has be agreed. The Awards will take place on Friday 9th June in the Atrium of Aras an Chonate at 6.30pm

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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

**Gerard Dennigan**

**A/Meetings Administrator**

**Confirmed and adopted at Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 14 June 2023.**

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

**Cathaoirleach.**