



## BUANORDUITHE STANDING ORDERS

**Ballymahon Municipal District**

**These Standing Orders were prepared by Ballymahon Municipal District in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 16(1) of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, and provide for the Regulation of the Business and Proceedings of the Meetings of Ballymahon Municipal District.**

**Meetings should be conducted in a professional and business-like manner. Councillors should treat their colleagues and staff with courtesy and respect and obey the rulings of the Chair and Standing Orders.**

### **Meetings of the Municipal District Members**

1. Meetings of the Municipal District shall be held on the fourth Thursday of the months of January, March, May, July, September and November. A schedule of the meetings of the Municipal District shall be approved at the Annual Meeting each year.
2. Other meetings of the Municipal District may be held on any other day as agreed by resolution.
3. In so far as practicable, the place for holding meetings of the Municipal District shall be Ballymahon Library and meetings shall normally be held there.
4. Provision is made, in these Standing Orders, for meetings to be held as follows -
  - Ballymahon Library
  - Edgeworthstown
  - Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford.
  - A suitable external venue, in the County, used to accommodate meetings of the Council.
  - One or more Council buildings or rooms, linked remotely.
  - An electronic, digital or virtual location, web address or a conference call telephone number.
  - A combination of the above to provide for physical and/or remote attendance by Elected Members.
5. Meetings will commence at 4pm or at any other time, time to remain flexible as agreed by resolution of the Members and will continue for no longer than two hours.
6. In order to accommodate delegations or presentations at meetings, provision is made in these Standing Orders for meetings to commence at 3pm. Such

Municipal District meetings, which incorporate delegations or presentations, will continue for no longer than two and a half hours.

7. Where for any reason it is decided that a meeting of the Municipal District is to take place on a day or at a time other than as provided for in Standing Orders 1 to 5, a decision to do so must be adopted at a full meeting of the Municipal District **or** by the decision of the Cathaoirleach. In such circumstances each Member of the Municipal District must be made aware of the time and date at which the meeting is to take place.
8. For official purposes the address of the Municipal District shall be Ballymahon Municipal District, Áras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford, Co. Longford

### **Notice of Meeting**

9. A notification of the intention to hold a Meeting or Special Meeting of the Municipal District shall
  - (a) Be sent electronically to each Member of the Municipal District.
  - (b) Specify the date, time and place of the meeting.
  - (c) Give not less than three clear days' notice of the intention to hold the meeting.

The three clear days shall exclude:

- (i) The normal day for receipt of the notice, and
- (ii) The day of the meeting

In respect of a meeting to consider a Draft Budgetary Plan the Members shall be sent a notification electronically, giving seven clear days notice, of the intention to convene the meeting. Notifications should specify the day, date, time and place at which the meeting is to be convened.

Any reports or other documentation for consideration at a meeting of the Municipal District shall be made available, in advance of the meeting, on the Elected Members' extranet. A link to the documentation will be provided with the meeting notice. The link will be updated once documentation is ready for circulation or as it becomes available.

A notification to attend a meeting of the Municipal District, including "In Committee" meetings, shall include or be accompanied by an agenda listing the business to be transacted at the meeting. No business shall be transacted at a meeting other than the business listed on the agenda or business which is required by law to be transacted.

An agenda listing the business to be transacted at the meeting may be altered (whether by way of addition, deletion or otherwise). An amended agenda specifying the alteration shall be sent electronically to each Member before the day on which the meeting is to be held.

Want of service or non-receipt of a notification by any Member or the lack of a signature or any other defect in the notification shall not affect the validity of a Meeting or of any act or thing done at the Meeting. For the purposes of this Standing Order “signature” includes an electronic or other signature by whatever process reproduced or a printed version of the name of the Meetings Administrator.

### **Annual Meeting**

- 10.** In a Local Election year the Annual Meeting shall be held on a date specified by Longford County Council, which shall be not later than 10 days after the Annual Meeting of the Council.

In every other year the Annual Meeting shall be held on a day in either May or June that is selected by resolution of the Members.

Whenever, for any reason, the Annual Meeting is not held on the agreed date, the Meetings Administrator shall, following consultation with the Cathaoirleach or the Leas-Cathaoirleach, as appropriate, convene the Annual Meeting.

In a Local Election Year, the Meetings Administrator shall, as soon as the Council makes its decision, publish a notice on the Council’s website indicating the venue, time, date on which it is proposed to hold the Municipal District Annual Meeting and details of the business that is to be transacted at the Annual Meeting.

At an Annual Meeting in a Local Election Year the first item of business shall be the election of a Cathaoirleach and the second item of business shall be the election of a Leas-Cathaoirleach.

At an Annual Meeting in a Local Election year and until the election of the Cathaoirleach at such an Annual Meeting, the Chair shall be taken by the Meetings Administrator. The Meetings Administrator shall not have a vote while chairing an Annual Meeting.

### **Meeting to consider a Draft Budgetary Plan**

- 11.** The Chief Executive shall consult with the Members in the preparation of the draft Council Budget. In order to facilitate the consultation process a Draft

Budgetary Plan shall be prepared and circulated to the Members of the Municipal District.

The Draft Budgetary Plan will allow the Members to determine the manner in which the General Municipal Allocation will be spent.

The Draft Budgetary Plan shall be considered by the Members within any period that is determined by the Minister and deliberations in respect of it shall be concluded no later than 21 days prior to the date on which the Council's Budget meeting is to take place.

### **Special Meetings**

**12.** A Special Meeting of the Municipal District may be convened at any time by the Cathaoirleach. If the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or if the Cathaoirleach is unable to act the Leas-Cathaoirleach may convene a Special Meeting.

A Special Meeting of the Municipal District shall be convened at any time on foot of a notice in writing which is presented to the Cathaoirleach if it has been signed by any three Members.

If for any reason the Cathaoirleach refuses or neglects, on foot of a notice that is presented to convene a Special Meeting within seven days of the date on which the notice is presented, the Members may convene a Special Meeting.

A notification of the intention to hold a Special Meeting of the Municipal District shall:

- (a) Be sent electronically to each Member of the Municipal District.
- (b) Specify the place, date and time of the meeting, and
- (c) Give not less than three clear days notice of the intention to hold the meeting.

The three clear days shall only exclude:

- (i) The normal day for receipt of the notice, and
- (ii) The day of the meeting

Information relating to the reason for which a Special Meeting is being convened must be included with the notification that is sent to the members.

### **Meetings "In Committee"**

**13.** The Members may convene an "In Committee" meeting or may hold a part of any meeting "In Committee" where it is determined by resolution of the

Municipal District that it is appropriate to do so and where the authority considers that such action is not contrary to the overall public interest.

The resolution shall indicate in a general way the reasons for the resolution and those reasons shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

It is necessary that at least three Members vote in favour of the resolution to hold an “In Committee” meeting.

On occasions that an “In Committee” meeting is scheduled in advance of a Municipal District Meeting, the “In Committee” meeting should commence at 2.30pm, unless otherwise agreed by the Cathaoirleach. The combined duration of the two meetings will be two and a half hours. A comfort break of 15 minutes should be provided for between both meetings.

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.

### **Public Notice of Meeting**

**14.** A Public Notice indicating the place, date and time of any meeting of the Municipal District shall be displayed not less than three clear days before the day of the meeting and Notice of Meeting shall be placed on [www.longfordcoco.ie](http://www.longfordcoco.ie) and the Members extranet.

Any such Public Notice shall include the agenda for the meeting or specify a place where the agenda can be inspected.

In the case of a meeting requisitioned under Standing Order 13 the agenda shall include or be accompanied by a copy of the requisition.

Subject to any arrangements that it may make from time to time the Municipal District shall give notice to the local media of the intention to hold a meeting of the Municipal District and shall circulate the agenda relating to the business to be transacted at the meeting.

### **Notification of Meeting**

**15.** A notification of the intention to hold any meeting of the Municipal District shall have the signature of the Meetings Administrator and any document that includes the signature of the Meetings Administrator shall be deemed duly issued or given with the authority of Ballymahon Municipal District unless proven that the signature is not in fact the signature of the Meetings Administrator.



The validity of a meeting of the Municipal District or of any act or thing done at a meeting of the Municipal District shall not be affected for want of the service or non-receipt of a notification of the intention to hold a meeting of the Municipal District on or by any Member or for the lack of a signature or any other defect in the notification of the intention to hold a meeting of the Municipal District.

“Signature” includes an electronic signature by whatever process reproduced or a printed version of the name of the Meetings Administrator.

### **Constitution of Meetings**

- 16.** The Chair shall be taken by the Cathaoirleach at a meeting of the Municipal District within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for the holding of the meeting. In the absence of the Cathaoirleach, the Leas Cathaoirleach shall take the Chair or in the absence of both the Cathaoirleach and the Leas Cathaoirleach a Member selected by the general agreement of the Members present or chosen by a vote of the Members present shall chair the meeting. Any Member selected to Chair a meeting of the Municipal District shall leave the Chair on the arrival of the Cathaoirleach or the Leas Cathaoirleach.
- 17.** The names of the Members attending a meeting of the Municipal District shall be recorded in alphabetical order in the Meetings Attendance Register and each Member is required to enter their signature in the Meetings Attendance Register.
- 18.** The quorum for a meeting of Ballymahon Municipal District is three so long as the total number of seats is fixed at six.

A meeting of the Municipal District cannot be properly convened unless a minimum of three Members are present.

If three Members are not present within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for the holding of a meeting of the Municipal District, the Meeting shall stand adjourned to a day to be determined by the Cathaoirleach.

Whenever a meeting of the Municipal District is abandoned owing to the fact that less than three Members are present the names of those present at the time and place appointed for the meeting shall be recorded by the Meetings Administrator and they shall for all purposes be deemed to have attended a duly constituted meeting of the Municipal District.

If three Members are not present at any time during a meeting of the Municipal District, the meeting shall stand adjourned to a day to be determined by the Cathaoirleach.

### **Order of Business**

- 19.** The Order of Business at all meetings of the Municipal District other than at Annual Meetings and Special Meetings shall, subject to the provisions of any enactments, be as follows:
- a. Confirmation of Minutes.
  - b. Matters Arising.
  - c. Declaration of Interest.
  - d. Management Report.
  - e. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District for transaction at such meeting.
  - f. Notices of Motion.
  - g. Correspondence.

In the case of a Special Meeting, only the business specified in the notification for the meeting shall be transacted at it.

At any Meeting of the Municipal District, the Members may decide by agreement or by vote to take an item for consideration out of the sequence listed on the Agenda.

### **Confirmation of Minutes**

- 20.** A written account of the proceedings of each meeting of the Municipal District, to be known as the Minutes, shall be prepared by the Meetings Administrator.

The minutes shall include:

- (a) Date, place and time of the meeting,
- (b) Names of the Members present at the meeting,
- (c) Names of the senior employees of the local authority present at the meeting,
- (d) Reference to any report circulated to the Members prior to or at the meeting,
- (e) Number and names of Members voting for and against the motion and of those abstaining from voting when a roll call vote is taken.
- (f) Particulars of all resolutions passed at the meeting,
- (g) Such other matters as are considered by the Meetings Administrator to be appropriate.



A copy of the draft minutes of a meeting of the Municipal District shall be made available on the Members' extranet by the Meetings Administrator.

The draft minutes of a meeting of the Municipal District shall be submitted for confirmation as an accurate record of the business transacted at a meeting of the Municipal District at the next meeting of the Municipal District, where practicable, or where this is not practicable, at the next following meeting. The fact that the minutes were considered and adopted shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which they are considered.

When the minutes of a meeting of the Municipal District are confirmed, whether this is with or without amendment, the minutes of the meeting shall be signed by the person chairing the meeting at which they were confirmed and any minutes so signed shall be received in evidence without proof.

When the request that the minutes be confirmed is put from the Chair, a Member may object to any part of the minute as not being an accurate record and any question of altering the minutes shall be determined by a majority vote of the Members present at the meeting to which the minutes relate.

A copy of the minutes of a Municipal District meeting confirmed in accordance with this Standing Order shall be made available on [www.longfordcoco.ie](http://www.longfordcoco.ie).

A copy of the minutes of a Municipal District meeting shall be provided to any person applying for them on payment of such reasonable sum, being a sum not exceeding the reasonable cost of supplying the copy, as may be fixed by the Meetings Administrator.

### **Notices of Motion**

- 21.** A Notice of Motion must be submitted to the Meetings Administrator in writing by no later than 5:00pm five working days before the date of issue of the agenda for the meeting.
- 22.** Every Notice of Motion must be dated and signed by the Member or Members submitting it. A Notice of Motion shall be submitted to the Meetings Administrator.
- 23.** A Member or a group of members shall be entitled to submit up to **three** signed Notices of Motion for inclusion on the agenda for consideration at a meeting of the Municipal District. No Member may sign in excess of three Notices of Motion for any one meeting of the Municipal District.

Multiple Notice of Motions i.e. motions which relate to more than one topic are prohibited. The decision of the Cathaoirleach in such instances shall be final and binding.

No Member shall be permitted to have more than three Notices of Motion, including adjourned Notices of Motion included on the agenda for consideration at any one meeting of the Municipal District.

24. Notices of Motion shall be listed on the agenda in the order of their receipt.
25. The agenda shall not contain any motion which has been considered within the previous six months or any motion substantially similar to any motion considered within the previous six months. Any decision on what constitutes a substantially similar motion shall be decided upon by the Cathaoirleach.
26. Where any Notice of Motion is obviously out of order, illegal or contains unbecoming expressions, such a Notice of Motion shall be referred by the Meetings Administrator to the Cathaoirleach.
27. A motion may either be proposed by the Member in whose name it stands or if the Member is absent, by any member authorised by the Member **in writing** to do so.

#### **Motions to Amend or Revoke Resolutions**

28. A proposal to revoke or amend a resolution of the Municipal District shall only be made on foot of a Notice of Motion inserted on the agenda. Any such Notice of Motion shall specify the resolution to be revoked or amended. No such Notice of Motion shall be allowed to appear on the agenda to revoke or amend any resolution of the Municipal District within six months of the date of the adoption of such a resolution except with the written assent of not less than three Members of the Municipal District. A resolution may not be revoked at the meeting at which it has been adopted.

A minimum of three Members of the Municipal District must vote in favour of a Notice of Motion relating to the revocation or amendment of a resolution previously adopted by the Members of the Municipal District.

29. Subject to the provisions outlined above no matter decided by the Members of the Municipal District on foot of a Notice of Motion or on foot of a report of a committee shall be re-opened within six months of the date of such decision.

#### **Motion for Purpose of Dealing with Urgent Business**

- 30.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Standing Orders a Notice of Motion may be proposed for the purpose of dealing with urgent business related to a statutory function of the Municipal District.

A request for such a Notice of Motion shall be submitted in writing to the Cathaoirleach and Meetings Administrator not later than 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

The Cathaoirleach, at his/her total discretion, can accept such a request before the commencement of the meeting, if he/she considers the subject of the request to be a matter of urgency and expediency concerning the Municipal District.

Consideration of such a Notice of Motion is subject to the requirement that not less than three members vote in favour of a proposal to consider such a Notice of Motion.

### **Amendments to Notices of Motion**

- 31.** Any Member who proposes an amendment to a listed Notice of Motion must submit the amended Notice of Motion in writing to the Cathaoirleach before it can be considered. A request for such an amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Cathaoirleach and Meetings Administrator, not later than 12 noon on the day of the meeting. The Cathaoirleach, at his/her total discretion, can accept such a request before the commencement of the meeting.
- 32.** An amendment to a Notice of Motion cannot be considered unless it is seconded by a Member.
- 33.** In order to be considered, an amendment shall be relevant to the Notice of Motion on which it is moved and shall be to:
- Leave out words,
  - Leave out words and insert or add other words,
  - Insert or add words.

An amendment shall not be considered if it is equivalent to a direct negative or if it is not in fact an amendment of the Notice of Motion that it purports to amend.

- 34.** When an amendment on an original Notice of Motion is proposed and seconded, no second or subsequent amendment shall be considered until the first amendment has been considered.

35. When an amendment is affirmed the original Notice of Motion as amended becomes the substantive Notice of Motion upon which a vote shall be taken.
36. When an amendment is defeated, any further amendment may be proposed, but only one amendment shall be at any time before the meeting and an amendment shall not be in order if the Chair rules it to be substantially the same as an amendment already considered.

### **Withdrawal of Notices of Motion**

37. A Notice of Motion included on the agenda for a meeting of the Municipal District and proposed and seconded, may be withdrawn only when a request to do so, made by the Member proposing it, is supported by a majority of the Members present at the meeting.

### **Postponement of Notices of Motion**

38. If a Member is going to be absent for a Municipal District meeting, they can authorise a Member to propose their Notice of Motion on their behalf. This request must be done in writing and submitted to the Meetings Administrator in advance of the meeting.
39. If a Notice of Motion is included on the agenda for a meeting of the Municipal District, the proposing Member may request in writing to postpone its consideration.
40. Where a Member is absent and where no such request was submitted, the Notice of Motion will not be considered, and it shall **not** be included on a future agenda unless resubmitted by the Member for inclusion on a subsequent agenda.

### **Adjournment of a Meeting**

41. A proposal for the adjournment of a meeting of the Municipal District may only be made, by an Elected Member, having firstly discussed the matter with the Cathaoirleach or any other person chairing a meeting of the Municipal District.

If a proposal to adjourn a meeting of the Municipal District is adopted, the meeting shall be adjourned to a day then named or in the event of no such day being named, to the day of the next occurring meeting of the Municipal District.

A Special Meeting of the Municipal District may be adjourned from time to time until its business is concluded.

### **Order of Debate**

**42.** The Chair shall have the sole discretion in determining the order in which Members are permitted to speak.

**43.** A Member while speaking shall address only the Chair.

A Member speaking shall not be interrupted except upon a question of order, but may give way to any other Member desiring to make a personal explanation.

**44.** No member shall address the Municipal District for more than three minutes without the permission of the Chair.

A member may only speak once in relation to any item on the agenda or on any Notice of Motion except where a Notice of Motion is to be voted upon without discussion or debate.

The proposer of a Notice of Motion shall have the right to reply and when the proposer replies, the debate on the Notice of Motion shall be closed. The proposer of a Notice of Motion shall be restricted to three minutes or less with regard to the duration of the reply.

**45.** A Member who has spoken on a Notice of Motion may not propose or second an amendment to the Notice of Motion, but when an amendment is proposed and seconded, a Member who has already spoken may speak in relation to the amendment.

**46.** A Member may be permitted by the Chair to speak for a second time on a Notice of Motion for the purpose of submitting a point of order or making a personal explanation. The Chair's decision in determining a point of order or personal explanation shall be final.

**47.** The Chair shall confirm that a Notice of Motion is seconded before the proposer is permitted to speak in relation to it.

**48.** A proposal "that the Municipal District proceed to the next item of business" may be made after any Notice of Motion is proposed and seconded. If such a proposal is made and seconded it shall be voted upon. If it is passed the business interrupted by the proposal shall not be proceeded with further at that meeting and unless the Municipal District determines otherwise it shall be adjourned to the next meeting of the Municipal District. A proposal to proceed to the next item of business shall not be made more than once during the debate on any matter.

49. At any time during a discussion on a Notice of Motion a Member may propose “that the question be now put” and if it is agreed by the majority of the Members present and voting, the motion shall be put, subject to the proposer of the original or substantive Notice of Motion being afforded the right of reply by the Chair.
50. When a Member seeks to make a point of order, the Member then addressing the Chair shall give way until the question of order has been determined by the Chair, unless the former seeks to address the Chair upon the question of order.
51. The Chair shall have authority to maintain order and enforce prompt obedience to any ruling made by the Chair. When during a debate the Chair indicates that they wish to speak, any Member then speaking shall give way to the Chair.
52. If, at a meeting, any Member misconducts by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair and the provisions of these Standing Orders, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair or any other Member may move “That the Member named be not further heard”, and the motion if seconded shall be put and determined without discussion.
53. If in the opinion of the Chair any Member is being disorderly by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively or by otherwise obstructing the business of the meeting, and the Chair has conveyed his or her opinion to the Members present by naming the Member concerned, then the Chair or any Member may move “that the Member named leave the meeting” and the motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.
54. Where it is decided that a Member must leave a meeting, that Member shall immediately leave the meeting and shall not be entitled to speak or to take any further part in that meeting on that day.
55. Where in the opinion of the Chair there is general disorder which impedes the orderly transaction of the business of a meeting or where a Member who is directed by the Chair to leave a meeting refuses to do so, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for such period as the Chair considers necessary in the interests of restoring order at the meeting.
56. A Member shall only address the Chair, when they are at one of the seats reserved for the use of the Members at a meeting.



57. The ruling of the Chair at a meeting of the Municipal District **is final** and shall not be open to discussion.

## **Deputations**

**58.** The Municipal District may by resolution decide to receive a deputation. The subject of the deputation must relate to the statutory functions of the Municipal District. Subject to the direction of the Chair, up to three persons may be permitted to speak on behalf of any deputation. The speakers may only speak for a combined total of ten minutes or less and ten minutes will be allowed for Q & A. All deputations shall be received at the commencement of the meeting.

All Deputations shall be received thirty minutes prior to the official commencement time of the meeting.

**59.** A request for a deputation to be heard by the Municipal District shall not be considered unless the subject matter to be discussed related to the statutory functions of the Municipal District and is notified in writing to the Meetings Administrator at least two weeks in advance of the date of the Meeting.

**60.** The Municipal District may, by resolution, decide to receive a deputation without the giving of notice provided for above, provided that at least one half of the Members present at the meeting vote in favour of a proposal that a deputation be heard.

**61.** A deputation may be questioned by Members of the Municipal District but shall not be entitled to ask questions of the Members.

When the speakers of a deputation have addressed the Members, the deputation shall withdraw from the meeting.

## **Presentations**

**62.** Presentations on issues relevant to the statutory functions of the Municipal District can be held at the commencement of meetings, subject to the agreement of the Cathaoirleach. Speakers may only speak for a combined total of ten minutes and ten minutes will be allowed for Q & A.

## **Declaration of Interest**

**63.** A Member must exclude themselves from a meeting or a part of a meeting and must not participate in any discussion relating to any matter in respect of which it could be reasonably perceived that a conflict of interest would result from their presence at the meeting or participation in a discussion on the matter.

## **Questions, Votes and Divisions**

**64.** Every decision of the Municipal District shall be determined by a show of hands or by the taking of a Roll Call Vote where the Chair directs that the vote shall be

taken by Roll Call. If a Roll Call Vote is taken the names of the Members who vote for/vote against/abstain the proposal shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting by the Meetings Administrator.

65. Where a show of hands decision is made a second vote may be taken in circumstances where:
  - a. The Chair does not formally declare the result of the vote, **or**
  - b. Where there is a doubt as to what the result of the vote is, **or**
  - c. If the Chair is of the opinion that through some misunderstanding, the first vote did not properly represent the sense of the meeting at the time of the vote.
  
66. Each Member present at a meeting of the Municipal District shall be entitled to vote unless they are prohibited from voting by any enactment.
  
67. Without prejudice to any enactment or other provisions of these Standing Orders requiring either the presence of a specified number or proportion of the Members or that a specified number or proportion of the Members should vote in favour of the doing of any particular act, all acts of the Municipal District which are Reserved Functions or questions duly coming or arising before a meeting of the Municipal District shall be determined:
  - a. By a majority of the members present and voting, **or**
  - b. Where there is an equality of votes, by the casting vote of the Chair, where the Chair chooses to exercise their casting vote.

**Attendance of Public and Media**

68. The right of the public and representatives of the media to attend Municipal District meetings is subject to the following:
  - The public and representatives of the media may be excluded from a meeting or part of a meeting where the Municipal District is of opinion that their absence is desirable because of the special nature of the meeting or the special nature of an item of business to be considered at the meeting or for other special reasons.
  - The Municipal District may, by resolution, in respect of which three Members vote in favour, decide to meet “In Committee” for the whole or part of the meeting concerned. The resolution in this instance shall indicate in a general way the reasons for which the public and representatives of the media are to be excluded and those reasons shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
  
69. Members of the public and representatives of the media shall occupy the parts of the Meeting Room allotted for their use.

Members of the public shall be admitted to a meeting of the Municipal District subject to the following conditions:

- (a) The number of persons to be admitted may be limited taking into account the available space and any public health restrictions
- (b) Compliance with any direction given by the Chair
- (c) The taking of photographs, videos or the use of any means for recording or relaying the proceedings at a Meeting as they take place or at a later stage is strictly prohibited.

- 70.** Members of the public present at a meeting shall be seated and shall maintain silence and observe any directions given by the Chair or by any employee while they are attending Meetings.

If a member of the public interrupts the conduct of the business of a meeting at any time or endeavours, without the permission of the Chair to address a meeting, the Chair shall warn the person and if the interruption continues the Chair shall order that person's removal.

In the case of a general disturbance in any part of the Meeting Room open to the public, the Chair shall order that part of the Meeting Room to be cleared.

The Chair at a meeting may call a Member to order on any matter or in respect of any misconduct. A Member must comply with any request made by the Chair and failure to do so shall be sanctioned by exclusion from the meeting and any future meeting of the Municipal District unless and until the Chair permits the Member to once again attend meetings.

- 71.** Mobile phones shall be turned off or placed on silent mode and not used by any person in attendance at any meeting of the Municipal District or its Committees.
- 72.** The taking of photographs, video or the use of any means for recording or relaying the proceedings at a meeting as they take place or at a later stage, by any person in attendance at any meeting of the Municipal District or its Committees, is strictly prohibited.
- 73.** Requests for documentation circulated or presented at meetings should be made to the Meetings Administrator.

### **Protocol on Adjournment of Meetings**

74. A proposal for the adjournment of a Meeting of the Municipal District may only be made having firstly discussed the matter with the Cathaoirleach or any other person chairing a Meeting of the Municipal District.
75. A meeting of the Municipal District will be adjourned for fifteen minutes as a mark of respect on the death of a former member of the Municipal District or an immediate relative of a member i.e. father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, spouse/partner.
76. A meeting of the Municipal District will be adjourned to a date to be decided by the members on the death of a serving member of the Municipal District.
77. A Special Meeting may be adjourned from time to time until its business is concluded.

### **Duration of Standing Orders**

78. The foregoing Standing Orders shall continue in force until, amended, revoked and new Standing Orders made, by a resolution, for which at least one half of the total number of the members vote in favour.

### **Matters not covered by Standing Orders**

79. The Cathaoirleach will have power to deal with any matter not covered by Standing Orders.

### **Interpretation of Standing Orders**

80. The Cathaoirleach's ruling on any question or interpretation of the Standing Order will be final.

### **Commencement and Revocation**

81. These Standing Orders shall come into operation on the 26 July 2024 and all Standing Orders previously made by the Municipal District and not already revoked will be revoked with effect as from that date.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **Special Committees**

82. The Municipal District may at any time establish a Special Committee for any specific purpose. When the Members agree to establish any such Committee, the Members shall at the same time determine the number of Members who will be members of the Special Committee. The Members to be members of a Special Committee shall be selected by the Municipal District. The quorum of

any Special Committee appointed shall not be less than three. The term of office of a Special Committee shall be for such period as the Municipal District may determine when establishing the Committee or until the work of the Special Committee is complete, whichever is the earlier.

- 83.** At the first meeting of any Special Committee the members shall appoint a Chairperson and, where practical, fix the day and time of future meetings of the Special Committee.
- 84.** In the election of members of a Special Committee, the candidates shall be proposed and seconded and if the number of Members so proposed and seconded does not exceed the number of vacancies, then those Members so proposed and seconded shall be declared to be members of the Special Committee. Should the number of Members so proposed and seconded exceed the number of vacancies to be filled then a vote shall be taken.
- 85.** When a vacancy occurs in the membership of any Special Committee of the Municipal District, by reason of the death, resignation or disqualification of a Member, the vacancy shall be filled as soon as circumstances permit by the Municipal District and following the giving of any necessary notice of intention to fill the vacancy.
- 86.** At a meeting of a Special Committee, a proposal may be put forward by a Member without the necessity for the proposal to be seconded and the proposing Member may speak more than once during the discussion relating to the proposal. Apart from this provision the provisions, as set out in these Standing Orders, with regard to procedures at meetings of the Municipal District shall, in so far as they are conveniently applicable, be applied with regard to all proceedings at the meetings of a Special Committee. The Member in the Chair at any meeting of a Special Committee shall have the authority to determine questions of order.
- 87.** Every Special Committee established by the Municipal District shall, in the whole of its proceedings, be governed by these Standing Orders and any Resolutions of the Municipal District that affect the conduct of the Special Committee.
- 88.** A copy of every Report of a Special Committee to be submitted to the Members shall be transmitted to each Member of the Sub-Committee at least three days before any Meeting at which it is to be first discussed, save in cases of urgency when the circulation of the report at a Meeting shall be sufficient.



- 89.** Representatives of the media and the public may be present at meetings of a Special Committee of the Municipal District when the members of the Special Committee permit such attendance.
- 90.** A decision may be made to exclude representatives of the media and the public from the whole or any part of meeting of a Special Committee of the Municipal District.
- 91.** The Meetings Administrator shall summon a meeting of any Special Committee at the request of the Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District or at the request of the Chair of the Special Committee, or at the request of any three members of the Special Committee, or whenever the Meetings Administrator deems it necessary in special circumstances that a Special Committee shall meet.
- 92.** The Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District shall be an ex-officio member of every Special Committee.
- 93.** At a meeting of any Special Committee and in the absence of the Chair of the Special Committee, the Chair shall be taken by any member of the Special Committee where this is agreed at the meeting.
- 94.** The Chair of each Special Committee shall be responsible to the Municipal District members for the general management of the business entrusted to the Special Committee.
- 95.** The decisions of the Special Committees of the Municipal District shall only become binding when the Members decide by resolution at a Meeting of the Municipal District that the decision is binding.

Standing Orders confirmed and adopted by Members of Ballymahon Municipal District at Meeting held on 26 July 2024.

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**Cathaoirleach**

**Made under the Official Seal of Longford County Council.  
This 26 day of July 2024.**

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**Nominated Employee**

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**Director of Services.**

## Definitions

In these Orders “Municipal District” means Ballymahon Municipal District.

“*Councillor*” means a person elected or co-opted to fill the office of Councillor for the Administrative County of Longford.

“*Cathaoirleach*” means a person who shall be elected to chair the Municipal District Committee meetings.

“*The Chief Executive*” means the Chief Executive for the Administrative County of Longford or in his absence such other person as is duly authorised to act for him.

The “*Meetings Administrator*” means an employee who has been assigned the duties of meetings administration in accordance with Section 46 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended.

The “*Director of Services*” means an employee or other such officer acting for him/her with responsibility for a programme or programmes of works.

The word “*month*” when used in Resolutions, Standing Orders and Regulations of the Council shall be deemed to mean a calendar month.

“*A Point of Order*” shall be a question dealing only with the conduct of procedure of a debate.

In the computation of a number of clear days, both of the terminal days are to be excluded. In counting clear days, Sundays and Christmas day are not to be included in the computation. If the notice exceeds seven days, Sundays and Christmas Day are to be included.

Throughout the Standing Orders, unless the contrary intention is shown, the masculine gender shall be deemed to include the feminine words and the singular shall include the plural and vice versa.



**LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL  
SUPPLEMENTARY STANDING ORDERS**

**Regulating the Proceedings of the Municipal District in relation to Remote and Blended Meetings.**

**Purpose**

These Supplementary Standing Orders allow for Remote and Blended Meetings of the Municipal District and its Committees. These Standing Orders are prepared following the designation of the Local Authority in the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 (Section 29) Local Authorities (Designation) Order 2020 (S.I. No. 445 of 2020).

These Supplementary Standing Orders were prepared in accordance with Circular Letter LG 07/2020 dated 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

These Supplementary Standing Orders should be read in conjunction with the Municipal District's Standing Orders adopted 26 July 2024.

**Remote and Blended Meetings**

1. Given the designation of local authorities, the meetings of Ballymahon Municipal District may now be held at:
  - Ballymahon Library.
  - Edgeworthstown Library
  - The Council Chamber.
  - A suitable external venue, in the County, used to accommodate meetings of the Council.
  - One or more Council buildings or rooms, linked remotely.
  - An electronic, digital or virtual location, web address or a conference call telephone number.
  - A combination of the above to provide for physical and/or remote attendance by elected members.
  
2. Where Blended Meetings are arranged, a risk assessment will be carried out and meeting arrangements and attendance will comply with the most up to date public health advice and sectoral guidance.



### **Management of Remote or Blended Meetings**

3. Members should notify their Meetings Administrator in advance if they intend to attend the meeting remotely.
4. Any member participating in a meeting remotely must, when they are speaking, be able to be heard and seen by all other members in attendance, and the remote participant must, in turn, be able to hear (and see, where practicable) those other members participating.
5. The Cathaoirleach will at the outset, and at any reconvening of a meeting, call a roll call of participating members and ensure that they can hear and see those in attendance. Any member participating remotely should also confirm at the outset and at any reconvening of the meeting that they can hear and see the proceedings. Members should inform the meeting if they lose connection in accordance with provisions on connectivity within the agreed Standing Orders.
6. The attendance of those members at the meeting will be recorded by the Meetings Administrator.
7. The normal quorum requirements for meetings as set out in the Municipal District's Standing Orders will also apply to a remote/blended meeting. Members attending physically and remotely will together constitute a quorum.
8. Each member participating remotely has personal responsibility to ensure and confirm to the Meetings Administrator that there are no other persons present who are not entitled to be either hearing or seeing consideration of such items, and/or recording the proceedings, in accordance with Standing Orders that apply.
9. Subject to compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the Meeting Administrator may facilitate and put in place appropriate arrangements for the recording of the meeting for the sole purpose of taking minutes. However, this recording shall only be used for this purpose and will be deleted once the minutes are confirmed.

### **Meeting Procedures.**

10. The Meetings Administrator will coordinate the facilitation of the meeting. An appropriate official will assume responsibility for controlling the conferencing technology employed for remote access and attendance, and to administer the member interaction, engagement and connections on the instruction of the Cathaoirleach.



11. The Cathaoirleach, at the beginning of the meeting, will explain the protocol for members' participation.
12. The length of the meeting and the numbers attending should be kept to a minimum. The Cathaoirleach will outline at the start the proposed meeting finish time.
13. It is recommended that the Cathaoirleach and members give consideration to the effective and efficient management of Notice of Motions, e.g.:
  - Only the Proposer and the Seconder to speak to a Notice of Motion.
  - If the Proposer is happy with the written reply, the matter is then concluded and move on.
  - Written replies by the Executive to Notice of Motions to be shared with all Members before the meeting by electronic means.
14. Members who wish to speak should use the notification process as directed by the Cathaoirleach, and then speak when invited.
15. The rules of debate as set out in Primary Standing Orders will apply.

### **Connectivity**

16. Members should allow sufficient time to establish a connection prior to the commencement of the start of the meeting to allow themselves and the Meetings Administrator the opportunity to test the connection.
17. In the event of any apparent failure of the video, telephone or conferencing connection, the Cathaoirleach should immediately determine if the meeting is still quorate. If there is no quorum, then the meeting shall adjourn for a short period specified by the Cathaoirleach, to allow the connection to be re-established.
18. Should a Member's remote connection fail, the Cathaoirleach may call a short adjournment to determine whether the connection can quickly be re-established.
19. If the connection cannot be restored or an alternative method of communication established within the time specified by the Cathaoirleach, the meeting should continue, provided the meeting remains quorate.
20. If the connection is successfully re-established, then the remote member(s) will be deemed to have returned at the point of re-establishment.

### **Protocol for Members Participation at Remote or Blended Meetings.**

21. Members should comply with Etiquette for Online Microsoft Teams Meetings – Appendix 1.
22. Members must keep their camera on for the duration of the meeting.
23. Members should be careful to ensure that confidential papers are not seen in the video-feed.
24. Members must mute their microphones unless they are recognised by the Chair and invited to speak.
25. Members will only speak when invited to by the Cathaoirleach.
26. Only one person may speak at any one time.
27. Members will unmute their microphone when the Cathaoirleach invites them to speak. The meetings platform chat facility must not be used for private conversations between Councillors.
28. When referring to a specific report, page or slide, members should mention the report, page, or slide so that all members have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times.
29. When satisfied that there has been sufficient debate, the Cathaoirleach will ask for a proposer and seconder for the item being discussed and progress to making a decision.

### **Voting**

30. A vote taken remotely in accordance with the Standing Orders of the local authority constitutes a valid vote towards the decision of the Municipal District.
31. Where a member loses connectivity during a statutory vote, every effort will be made to re-establish a connection. If a connection cannot be restored within a reasonable timeframe, every effort should be made to allow the member to vote by an alternative means i.e. by phone contact with the Meetings Administrator, and the vote recorded accordingly.

### **Leaving a Remote or Blended Meeting**

32. Members leaving the meeting should inform the Meetings Administrator by the appropriate means i.e. through Chat on MS Teams that they are exiting the

meeting to ensure there is a Quorum remaining and so that it is not presumed to be a loss in connectivity.

### **Declaration of Interests**

- 33.** Any Member participating in a remote/blended meeting who declares a disclosable pecuniary or other beneficial interest, under Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, in any item of business that would normally require them to leave the room, must also leave the remote meeting, advising the Cathaoirleach and members at the time of departure and this shall be recorded in the minutes. Their departure will be confirmed by the Meetings Administrator, who will invite the relevant Member, by phone contact, to re-join the meeting at the appropriate time.

### **Attendance of Public and Media at a Remote Meeting or Blended (Section 45(3) Local Government Act 2001 – 2014)**

- 34.** Members of the public and media may be present at a remote/blended meeting but must maintain silence and observe any directions given by the Chair or by any employee in attendance.
- 35.** Members of the media and public should give prior notice of joining virtually in accordance with agreed local arrangements. To manage numbers and attendance, the meetings administrator may consider utilising electronic invitations compatible with the platform in use.
- 36.** The taking of photographs, video or the use of any means for recording or relaying the proceedings at a meeting as they take place or at a later stage, by any person in attendance at any meeting of the Municipal District or its Committees, is strictly prohibited.

### **Meetings “In Committee”**

- 37.** In line with the provisions of Section 45 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, the Municipal District may by resolution decide to meet “In Committee” for the whole or part of the meeting concerned.
- 38.** Should the Municipal District elect to meet “In Committee” for some or all of the meeting the Meetings Administrator or designated person will ensure that there are no members of the public or media in remote attendance or remotely accessing the meeting or are able to hear or see the proceedings once the exclusion has been agreed by the meeting.

39. Where the Municipal District has by resolution decided to meet in committee for the whole or part of the meeting concerned, each member participating remotely has personal responsibility to ensure and confirm to the Meetings Administrator that there are no other persons present and or recording the meeting who are not entitled to be present at the Committee Meeting.

**Any Member participating remotely will comply with the adopted Supplementary Standing Orders throughout the duration of the meeting.**

**Supplementary Standing Orders agreed and adopted by Members of Ballymahon Municipal District under paragraph 16(1) of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, to come into effect on and from 26 July 2024**

## Appendix 1



### Etiquette for Online Microsoft Teams Meetings

- Chair/Cathaoirleach to log on **15 minutes** prior to the meeting.
- Participants to log on **10 minutes** prior to the meeting start time to ensure that the system is working correctly.
- Participants should be located in a quiet area, where there will be no interruptions or distractions.
- Keep camera on for the duration of the meeting.
- Wear appropriate work/meeting clothing.
- All participants switch their mobile phone to silent.
- Think about background and lighting – for example, use a plain wall as background, avoid having a window in the background, lighting from the side is best.
- Blur the background, if appropriate, by selecting appropriate option on toolbar.
- Do not leave the online meeting without informing the Cathaoirleach and Meetings Administrator.
- Speak clearly, using normal level and tone.
- Use Chat to send a message and raise the Hand function to indicate you wish to speak or raise a question on a matter.

#### Microphone/Camera

- Cathaoirleach/speakers will keep their camera/microphone on while speaking.
- When not speaking, please keep the microphone on mute - The microphones can be very sensitive and will pick up the sounds of pencil tapping and paper shuffling.
- Frame the camera correctly so as to be clearly seen.
- Position directly in front of the camera/screen and look into the **camera**.
- Practice speaking to the camera and not the screen.

#### Connection

- Be as close as possible to the WIFI connection at the location.
- If there is a large number of people attending, it is possible that connection may be lost. If the connection is interrupted, try again by refreshing the page or clicking on the original meeting link.

**Remember** - Whatever you say or do can be heard and seen by someone.