



BUANORDUITHE STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were prepared by Longford County Council 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 Longford County Council.

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.

Plenary Meetings of the Council

1. Unless upon any occasion when it is otherwise fixed by statute or by resolution of the Council, the meetings of the Council shall be held on the second Wednesday of the every month with the exception of August.

Annual Budget meeting - meeting date prescribed by regulations.

2. In so far as practicable, the place for holding meetings of the Council shall be the principal offices at Aras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford and meetings shall normally be held there.
3. Provision is made, in these Standing Orders, for meetings to be held as follows -
 - Council Chamber, Aras 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.
4. Meetings will commence at 4.00 p.m. and will continue for no longer than three hours.
5. In order to accommodate delegations or presentations at meetings, provision is made in these Standing Orders for meetings to commence at 3:30pm. Such Council meetings, which incorporate delegations or presentations, will continue for no longer than three and a half hours.
6. Where for any reason it is decided that a meeting of the Council is to take place on a day or at a time or at a place other than as provided for in Standing Order 1

to Standing Order 5, a decision to do so must be adopted at a full meeting of the Council. In such circumstances each Member of the Council must be made aware of the time, date and location at which the meeting is to take place.

Notice of Meeting

7. A notification of the intention to hold any meeting of the Council shall
- (a) Be sent electronically to each Member of the Council
 - (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

Any reports or other documentation for consideration at a meeting of the Council 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 Council, 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, unless a Notice of Motion is proposed and adopted by those present at the meeting under the provisions of Standing Order 32.

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.

In the event that a Special Meeting of the Council is convened as provided for under Standing Order 11, a copy of the requisition shall be circulated to each Member with the notification to attend the Special Meeting. **No other business** shall be transacted at a Special Meeting other than the business specified in the requisition to convene the Special Meeting.

Annual Meeting

8. In every year in which a Local Election is held, the Annual Meeting of Longford County Council shall be held on the fourteenth day after Polling Day or, where the poll is for any reason countermanded, interrupted or adjourned, after the day on which the poll is completed or the fresh poll is held.

Where the fourteenth day is an excluded day, the meeting shall be held on the next following day which is not an excluded day.

In every other year, Longford County Council shall hold an Annual Meeting on such day, in the month of May or June, as determined by resolution of the Council.

Whenever an Annual Meeting is for any reason not held on the appointed day the Meetings Administrator shall, following consultation with the Cathaoirleach, or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or the Cathaoirleach is unable to act, with the Leas Cathaoirleach, convene the Annual Meeting on a day which the Meetings Administrator considers to be the earliest convenient date for that purpose.

In a year in which a Local Election is held the Meetings Administrator shall publish a notice declaring the time and date the Annual Meeting of the Council is to take place in at least one newspaper circulating in the administrative area of the Council. The notice shall state the date of the Annual Meeting and where appropriate that the first business of the meeting is the election of the Cathaoirleach. In addition, the notice shall specify details of joint bodies and other bodies to which the Council is entitled to make appointments at the Annual Meeting or subsequently. The notice shall be in a form consistent with the regulations made relating to the holding of the Annual Meeting and shall be published within the period prescribed by regulations.

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.

At an Annual Meeting in a Local Election year the Meetings Administrator shall read out the names of the persons duly elected as Members of Longford County Council.

The first item of business on the Agenda of an Annual Meeting is the election of a Cathaoirleach.

The next item of business on the Agenda of an Annual Meeting is the election of a Leas Cathaoirleach.

The next item of business on the Agenda of an Annual Meeting following the election of the Cathaoirleach and the Leas Cathaoirleach is the appointment or nomination of Members of the Council to be members of joint bodies or other bodies to which the Council is entitled to appoint members.

Annual Budget Meeting

9. The Annual Budget Meeting shall be held during the period prescribed by regulations.
10. 7 days' notice must be given to every member of the local authority in advance of the Budget Meeting.

Special Meetings

11. A requisition to hold a Special Meeting of the Council may be made at any time by the Cathaoirleach or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or if the Cathaoirleach is unable to act, by the Leas Cathaoirleach, or by the Cathaoirleach on foot of a request made in writing presented to the Cathaoirleach by **any five Members** of the Council.

Where the Cathaoirleach refuses or neglects to act on foot of a request to convene a Special Meeting submitted in writing by any five Members within seven days of it being presented to the Cathaoirleach, the Members making the request may convene a Special Meeting.

A requisition shall be made in writing and be delivered by the Member(s) making the requisition, as the case may be, to the meetings administrator.

The provisions of paragraph 6 of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, shall apply in relation to the calling of any such Special Meeting.

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

- (a) Be sent electronically to each Member of the Council.
- (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

Meetings “In Committee”

- 12.** The Council may convene an “In Committee” meeting or may hold a part of any meeting “In Committee” where it is determined by resolution of the Council that it is appropriate to do so 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 nine 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 Plenary Meeting, the “In Committee” meeting should commence at 3:00pm, unless otherwise agreed by the Cathaoirleach. The combined duration of the two meetings will be three 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

- 13.** A Public Notice indicating the place, date and time of any meeting of the Council 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 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 11 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 Council shall give notice to the local media of the intention to hold a meeting of the Council and shall circulate the agenda relating to the business to be transacted at the meeting.

Notification of Meeting

- 14.** A notification of the intention to hold any meeting of the Council 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 Longford County Council unless proven that the signature is not in fact the signature of the Meetings Administrator.

The validity of a meeting of the Council or of any act or thing done at a meeting of the Council shall not be affected for want of the service or non-receipt of a notification of the intention to hold a meeting of the Council 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 Council.

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

Constitution of Meetings

- 15.** The Chair shall be taken by the Cathaoirleach at a meeting of the Council 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 Council shall leave the Chair on the arrival of the Cathaoirleach or the Leas Cathaoirleach.
- 16.** The names of the Members attending a meeting of the Council 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.
- 17.** The quorum for a meeting of Longford County Council is six for so long as the total number of seats on the Council is fixed at eighteen.

A meeting of the Council cannot be properly convened unless a minimum of six Members are present.

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

Whenever a meeting of the Council is abandoned owing to the fact that less than six 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 Council.

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

Order of Business

18. The Order of Business at all Plenary Meetings of the Council other than at Annual Meetings, Annual Budget Meetings and Special Meetings shall, subject to the provisions of any enactments, be as follows:

- a. Consideration of Section 140 Notice (if applicable)
- b. Confirmation of Minutes.
- c. Matters Arising.
- d. Declaration of Interest.
- e. Management Report.
- f. Business relating to the activities of each Directorate, including Notices of Motions.

The listing of business relating to the activities of the Directorates will be rotated from Meeting to Meeting

- g. General Items
 - Notices of Motions not relevant to the specific functions of the local authority, which have been considered and approved for inclusion by the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive.
 - General Correspondence.
- h. Consideration of Training, in accordance with Regulations made under Section 142(5) of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, and the Local Government Reform Act 2014.
- i. Votes of Sympathy.
- j. Votes of Congratulations.

At any meeting of the Council it shall be proper, if a majority of the Members present and voting so decide, to take an item for consideration out of the sequence listed on the Agenda, provided always that such a decision shall not affect any business required by Statute to be done before any other business at the meeting.

Matters relating to specific areas of the county shall not normally be considered at Plenary Meetings of the Council unless they were previously discussed by the relevant Municipal District Meeting and referred to the Council. In this regard

the Cathaoirleach shall have the authority to determine whether or not any matter may be discussed at a Plenary Meeting of the Council.

Confirmation of Minutes

19. A written account of the proceedings of each meeting of the Council, 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 Council shall be made available on the Members' extranet by the Meetings Administrator.

The draft minutes of a meeting of the Council shall be submitted for confirmation as an accurate record of the business transacted at a meeting of the Council at the next meeting of the Council, 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 Council 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 Council meeting confirmed in accordance with this Standing Order shall be made available on www.longfordcoco.ie.

A copy of the minutes of a Council 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

- 20.** Notices of Motion must relate to the statutory functions of the Council.
- 21.** Notices of Motion which do not relate to the statutory functions of the Council are considered by the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive for inclusion on the Council agenda.
- 22.** A Notice of Motion must be submitted to the Meetings Administrator in writing by no later than 5.00 pm five working days before the date of issue of the agenda for the meeting.
- 23.** 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.
- 24.** 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 Council. No Member may sign in excess of three Notices of Motion for any one meeting of the Council.

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 Council.

- 25.** Notices of Motion shall be listed within the appropriate section of the agenda in the order in which they are received by the Meetings Administrator provided always that all motions relating to the statutory functions of the Council shall appear on the agenda before motions dealing with matters which do not relate to statutory functions of the Council.
- 26.** 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.

27. 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.
28. Any Notice of Motion, submitted in accordance with the agreed procedures, that relates to a matter normally dealt with by a Committee or comes within the terms of reference of Municipal Districts, shall be referred for consideration to the relevant Committee as the Meetings Administrator may determine to be appropriate. The Meetings Administrator will inform the Member or Members who signed the Notice of Motion of the decision to refer the Notice of Motion to a Committee or Municipal District for consideration. Any dispute with regard to the referral of a Notice of Motion to a Committee or Municipal District shall be determined by the Cathaoirleach.
29. 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

30. A proposal to revoke or amend a resolution of the Council 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 Council within six months of the date of the adoption of such a resolution except with the written assent of not less than ten Members of the Council. A resolution may not be revoked at the meeting at which it has been adopted.

A minimum of ten Members of the Council 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 Council.

31. Subject to the provisions outlined above no matter decided by the Members of the Council 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

32. 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 Council.

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 Council.

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

Amendments to Notices of Motion

- 33.** 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.
- 34.** An amendment to a Notice of Motion cannot be considered unless it is seconded by a Member.
- 35.** In order to be considered, an amendment shall be relevant to the Notice of Motion on which it is moved and shall be to:
 - a. Leave out words,
 - b. Leave out words and insert or add other words,
 - c. 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.

- 36.** 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.
- 37.** 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.

38. 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

39. A Notice of Motion included on the agenda for a meeting of the Council 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

40. If a Member is going to be absent for a Council 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.
41. If a Notice of Motion is included on the agenda for a meeting of the Council, the proposing Member may request in writing to postpone its consideration.
42. 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 of the Council

43. A proposal for the adjournment of a meeting of the Council 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 Council.

If a proposal to adjourn a meeting of the Council 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 Plenary Meeting of the Council.

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

Order of Debate

44. The Chair shall have the sole discretion in determining the order in which Members are permitted to speak.
45. 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.

- 46.** No member shall address the Council for more than five 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 five minutes or less with regard to the duration of the reply.

- 47.** 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.
- 48.** 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.
- 49.** The Chair shall confirm that a Notice of Motion is seconded before the proposer is permitted to speak in relation to it.
- 50.** A proposal "that the Council 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 Council determines otherwise it shall be adjourned to the next meeting of the Council. A proposal to proceed to the next item of business shall not be made more than once during the debate on any matter.
- 51.** 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.

52. 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.
53. 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.
54. 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.
55. 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.
56. 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.
57. 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.
58. 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.
59. The ruling of the Chair at a meeting of the Council **is final** and shall not be open to discussion.

Deputations

60. The Council may by resolution decide to receive a deputation either on the proposal of a Member, on the recommendation of the Chief Executive or on the recommendation of the Corporate Policy Group. The subject of the deputation

must relate to the statutory functions of the Council. 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.

61. A request for a deputation to be heard by the Council shall not be considered unless the subject matter to be discussed related to the statutory functions of the Council and is notified in writing to the Meetings Administrator. This application will be considered by the Corporate Policy Group at the next occurring Corporate Policy Group meeting.
62. The Council 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.
63. A deputation may be questioned by Members of the Council 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

64. Presentations on issues relevant to the statutory functions of the Council can be held at the commencement of Plenary Meetings, subject to the agreement of the Chair. Speakers may only speak for a combined total of ten minutes and ten minutes will be allowed for Q & A.

Declaration of Interest

65. 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

66. Every decision of the Council 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.

- 67. 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.

- 68. Each Member present at a meeting of the Council shall be entitled to vote unless they are prohibited from voting by any enactment.

- 69. 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 Council which are Reserved Functions or questions duly coming or arising before a meeting of the Council 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

- 70. The right of the public and representatives of the media to attend Council 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 Council 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 Council may, by resolution, in respect of which nine 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. (Standing Order 12 applies)

- 71. Members of the public and representatives of the media shall occupy the parts of the Council Chamber or Meeting Room allotted for their use.

Members of the public shall be admitted to a meeting of the Council 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.

72. Members of the public present at a meeting shall be seated and shall maintain silence and observe any directions given by the Chair.

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 Council unless and until the Chair permits the Member to once again attend meetings.

73. Mobile phones shall be turned off or placed on silent mode and not used by any person in attendance at any meeting of the Council or its Committees.

74. 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 Council or its Committees, is strictly prohibited.

75. Requests for documentation circulated or presented at meetings should be made to the Meetings Administrator.

Casual Vacancy

76. Casual vacancies will be filled in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended. For Members elected as the representatives of registered political parties the persons nominated to fill a casual vacancy must be from the same registered political party who nominated for election or co-option the member who caused the casual vacancy.

In the event of a casual vacancy arising in respect of a non-party Member, the casual vacancy shall be filled on the nomination of that member in the case of retirement or resignation. In all other cases the person who will fill the casual vacancy in respect of a non-party Member shall be named by the person authorised to name them. Each non-party Member is required to submit the name of the person who will nominate their successor in a sealed envelope to the Meetings Administrator.

Where a Member of a statutory committee who was nominated by a registered political party ceases to be such a member the vacancy shall be filled on the nomination of the registered political party that originally nominated the member of the statutory committee.

Reports to Council

- 77.** A Member or Members appointed to external bodies and boards may from time to time submit reports to the Council on matters arising in respect of such bodies or boards which have relevance to the Council and shall in any event do so in accordance with the requirements of Section 141, Local Government Act, 2001, as amended.

Suspension of Standing Orders

- 78.** A request for suspension of Standing Orders 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 Council.

Suspension of Standing Orders is subject to the requirement that at least nine members present vote in favour of the proposal to suspend Standing Orders.

Protocol on Adjournment of Meetings

- 79.** A meeting of the Council will be adjourned for fifteen minutes as a mark of respect on the death of a former member of the Council or an immediate relative of a member i.e. father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, spouse/partner.
- 80.** Provision is also made in the Civic Protocols for the adjourned of the Council meeting for fifteen minutes or a Minutes silence be observed as a mark of respect, as deemed appropriate by the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive, in respect of the following:
- The death of a national or international figure.

- The death of his holiness the Pope.
- The Primate of All Ireland.
- The President of Ireland.
- The Papal Nuncio.
- Archbishop of the Province.
- The Bishop of the Diocese or equivalent senior Clergymen in other Faiths.
- An employee of the Council.
- Any occasion deemed appropriate by the Cathaoirleach of Longford County Council or the Chief Executive.

81. A meeting of the Council will be adjourned to a date to be decided by the members on the death of a serving member of the Council.

Duration of Standing Orders

82. 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

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

Interpretation of Standing Orders

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

Commencement and Revocation

85. These Standing Orders shall come into operation on the 21 June 2024 and all Standing Orders previously made by the Council and not already revoked will be revoked with effect as from that date.

COMMITTEES

Strategic Policy Committees

86. The formation of Strategic Policy Committees and all matters relating to the appointment of members to the Strategic Policy Committees shall be carried out in accordance with the relevant Strategic Policy Committee Establishment Scheme of the Council.

87. Each Strategic Policy Committee shall meet as often as is required and shall meet at a minimum of at least three times a year, to deal with the business assigned to it.

Corporate Policy Group

88. The Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Chairs of the Strategic Policy Committees shall form the Corporate Policy Group, which shall meet as often as is required and shall operate as a forum for the discussion and consideration of policy affecting the whole of the county. The Corporate Policy Group shall report to the Council.
89. The Corporate Policy Group meetings will be scheduled on the same day as the Plenary Meeting of the Council and will be held in advance.

Municipal Districts

90. Longford County Council shall provide for the division of the County into three administrative areas which reflects the Local Electoral Areas the Members represent.
91. The Members of the Council representing each of the Local Electoral Areas shall be the members of the Municipal District for that area.
92. The election of a Cathaoirleach shall be the first item of business on the agenda of an Annual Meeting of the Municipal District.

The next item of business on the agenda shall be the election of a Leas Cathaoirleach.

93. The quorum for a Municipal District Meeting shall be the membership of that District divided by three, with any resulting fraction being disregarded, subject to the quorum being not less than three Members.
94. Each Municipal District may establish sub-committees as may be required to deal with any matters as may be decided from time to time by the members of the Municipal District. Any such sub-committee formed shall cease to exist upon the completion of its report to the Municipal District.
95. All matters relating to matters specific to a Local Electoral Area shall in the first instance be brought to the attention of the appropriate Municipal District for consideration.

Committees – General

- 96.** The Council may at any time establish a Special Committee for any specific purpose. When the Members agree to establish any such Committee, the Council 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 Council. 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 Council may determine when establishing the Committee or until the work of the Special Committee is complete, whichever is the earlier.
- 97.** 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.
- 98.** The process for the selection of members of Special Committees other than the selection of members of particular Special Committees, in respect of which special arrangements apply, such as Strategic Policy Committees, shall be in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 18 of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended.

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.

- 99.** When a vacancy occurs in the membership of any Special Committee of the Council, by reason of the death, resignation or disqualification of a Member, the vacancy shall be filled as soon as circumstances permit by the Council and following the giving of any necessary notice of intention to fill the vacancy.
- 100.** 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 Council 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.

- 101.** Every Special Committee established by the Council shall, in the whole of its proceedings, be governed by these Standing Orders and any Resolutions of the Council that affect the conduct of the Special Committee.
- 102.** A copy of every Report of a Special Committee shall be submitted to the Council and must be circulated to every Member of the Council at least three days before any meeting of the Council at which the report is to be considered, save in cases of urgency when the reading of the report to those present at the meeting of the Council shall suffice.
- 103.** Representatives of the media and the public may be present at meetings of a Special Committee of the Council when the members of the Special Committee permit such attendance.
- 104.** 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 Council.
- 105.** The Meetings Administrator shall summon a meeting of any Special Committee at the request of the Cathaoirleach of the Council 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.
- 106.** The Cathaoirleach of the Council shall be an ex-officio member of every Special Committee except where the membership of the Special Committee is fixed by Statute.
- 107.** 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.
- 108.** The Chair of each Special Committee shall be responsible to the Council for the general management of the business entrusted to the Special Committee.
- 109.** A Special Committee may appoint Sub-Committees from their number to facilitate the transaction of business and the members of any such Sub-Committee shall report to the Committee.
- 110.** No Sub-Committee shall have the power to transact any business without the express authority of the Special Committee that establishes it.

111. The decisions of the Special Committees of the Council shall only become binding on the Council when the Members decide by resolution at a Meeting of the Council that the decision is binding. In limited circumstances where the Council specifically empowers a Special Committee to deal, without further reference to the Council, with certain matters, and subject to all appropriate legal provisions, a decision of a Special Committee may become binding on the Council but not until the decision has been noted by the Members at a meeting of the Council.

Standing Orders confirmed and adopted by Members of Longford County Council at Meeting held on 21 June 2024.

Cathaoirleach

**Made under the Official Seal of Longford County Council.
This 21 day of June 2024.**

Nominated Employee

Chief Executive.

Definitions

In these Orders “*Council*” means the County Council of the Administrative County of Longford.

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

“*Cathaoirleach*” means a Chairperson who shall be elected and hold office in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended.

“*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.

“*Quorum*” The quorum for a meeting of Longford County Council shall be six for so long as the total number of seats on the Council is fixed at eighteen.

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 Council in relation to Remote and Blended Meetings.

Purpose

These Supplementary Standing Orders allow for Remote and Blended Meetings of Longford County Council 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 30th October 2020.

These Supplementary Standing Orders should be read in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders previously adopted on 9th September 2019 – updated in October 2020 and November 2021.

Remote and Blended Meetings

1. Given the designation of local authorities, the meetings of Longford County Council may now be held at:
 - 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 Council'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 Council.
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 Council 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 Council may by resolution decide to meet “In Committee” for the whole or part of the meeting concerned.
- 38.** Should the Council 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 Council 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 Longford County under paragraph 16(1) of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, to come into effect on and from 11th November 2020 and updated on 10th November 2021

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.