

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, AND ONLINE, ON MONDAY, 31ST MARCH, 2025, AT 3PM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Príomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor D. McSweeney.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Moran,

Councillors Beasley, Benson, Butler, Carey, Collins (B), Collins (M), Conway, Daly, Donoghue, Doyle, Foley, Galvin, Gavan, Hartigan (S), Hartigan (T), Hickey-O'Mara, Keary, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin, O'Donoghue, O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, O'Sullivan (O), O'Sullivan (T), Pond, Reale, Ruddle, Ryan (E), Ryan (M), Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan, Slattery, Stokes, Talukder, Teefy, Teskey, Ward.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director General (Dr. P. Daly), Deputy Director General and Director, Corporate Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development (Mr. G. Daly), Director, Finance, Economic Development, Digital and ICT Services (Mr. M. White), Director, Housing (Mr. B. Kennedy), Director, Regeneration, Sports and Recreation (Mr. J. Delaney), Director, Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development (Mr. S. Duclot), A/Director, Transportation and Mobility (Mr. H. McGrath), Director, Environment, Climate Action and Shared Services (Mr. K. Lehané), Director, Planning and Place-Making (Mr. V. Murray), Meetings Administrator (Ms. C. Farrell), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services (Ms. A. Foley), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services (Ms. C. Sheehy).

Also in Attendance: Ms. B. Quinn, Chair, Audit and Risk Committee.

Welcome to Visiting Councillor

At the outset, the Príomh Chomhairleoir opened the Meeting by welcoming Councillor Victor Moisa from Lapusna Local Council in Moldova.

Councillor Secas extended a warm welcome to the special guest in the public gallery, Councillor Moisa, and noted that he had travelled to Limerick to experience how Local Government worked in Ireland. She expressed her delight in welcoming him to Limerick.

The Members joined in welcoming Councillor Moisa and extended their best for his visit in Limerick.

Votes of Sympathy

The Príomh Chomhairleoir expressed deepest sympathy to Councillor Michael Collins, his wife Fiona and the extended family on the passing of Councillor Collins' father-in-law, Mortimer (Mort) O'Connor, Newcastle West, a former employee of Limerick County Council.

The Members associated themselves with the Vote of Sympathy to Councillor Collins, his wife Fiona and the extended family.

The Mayor joined in the Vote of Sympathy, as did the Director General on his own behalf and that of the Staff.

Councillor Collins thanked the Members and Staff for their sympathies. He noted that Mort had a long life and had spent 40 years working in Limerick County Council. He said his father-in-law was best known for his involvement in Newcastle West and Limerick GAA and had a huge love of the sport.

A minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect.

Vote of Congratulations

With the permission of the Príomh Chomhairleoir, congratulations were extended to the following:

- Limerick Manager, Jimmy Lee, the Management Team and Limerick footballers on winning the Division 4 League Title.
- J.P. and Noreen McManus on winning the Cheltenham Gold Cup with 'Inothewayurthinkin.'
- The Under 14 Huskies Basketball Team on winning the All-Ireland Club Championship.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copies of draft Minutes of the following Meetings:

- (a) Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 27th January, 2025.
- (b) Special Meeting of the Council held on 18th February, 2025, at 4pm.
- (c) Special Meeting of the Council held on 18th February, 2025, at 5pm.
- (d) Special Meeting of the Council held on 21st February, 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

"That, the draft Minutes, as circulated, be taken as read and adopted and signed."

2. Declaration of Interest

The Meetings Administrator stated that, in line with Part 15 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, and the Code of Conduct, she was inviting those present to notify the Meeting of any declaration of interest in any item due for discussion at the Meeting. No such interests were declared.

3. Disposal of Land

Housing Directorate

- (a) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 16th December, 2024, concerning disposal of 4, Main Street, Killeely, Co. Limerick, together with Site Layout Plan outlining the area in Red.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of 4 Main Street, Killeely, Co. Limerick, to Mai O’Keeffe, for the sum of €1.00, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 16th December, 2024.”

- (b) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 27th January, 2025, concerning disposal of 1, Main Street, Ballylanders, Co. Limerick, together with Drawing No. AG5274, outlining the area in Red.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of 1, Main Street, Ballylanders, Co. Limerick, to Catherine Hogan, Legal Personal Representative of Bridie O’Dwyer, deceased, for the sum of €1.00, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th January, 2025.”

Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development Directorate

General Disposals

- (c) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025, concerning disposal of 1.24 acres (0.50 hectares) Site E at Kilmallock Business Park, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of 1.24 acres (0.50 hectares) Site E at Kilmallock Business Park, Co. Limerick, to Kilmallock Coaches Ltd., for the sum of €45,000 – by resolution passed at Council Meeting dated 22nd January, 2024, the Elected Members resolve to rescind the previous S183 Notice dated 11th January, 2024, in relation to the disposal of Site E at Kilmallock Business Park, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick – the disposal to be subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract - particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025.”

- (d) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025, concerning disposal of freehold interest in property at 18 Parkview Drive, Greystones, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
 And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of the freehold interest in property at 18 Parkview Drive, Greystones, Limerick, to Patricia Dunworth, for the sum of €124.60, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025.”

- (e) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025, concerning disposal of freehold interest in property at 20, Glenview Drive, Shelbourne Park, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
 And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of freehold interest in property at 20, Glenview Drive, Shelbourne Park, Limerick, to Hannah Fitch, for the sum of €102.69, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025.”

- (f) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025 concerning disposal of 0.0128 acres (0.0052 hectares) of land at 9, St. Joseph Street, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
 And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of 0.0128 acres (0.0052 hectares) of land at 9, St. Joseph Street, Limerick, to Catherine Fitzgerald and Lily Bromell, for the sum of €1, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the lease, and Ms. Catherine Fitzgerald and Ms. Lily Bromell to discharge all legal and other costs incurred by Limerick City and County Council; particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025.”

- (g) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025, concerning disposal of office space consisting of 4,450 square feet on the first floor of Lissanalta House, Dooradoyle, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
 And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of office space consisting of 4,450 square feet on the first floor of Lissanalta House, Dooradoyle, Limerick, to Uisce Éireann by way of Lease Agreement for a period of two years and subject to the covenants and conditions contained therein, with an option to extend for a period of up to 12 months with a maximum of two such extensions, the rent payable being €19 per square foot per annum, the total rent payable per annum being €84,550, and Uisce Éireann also to contribute to the overall service charge and insurance costs for the building; particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025.”

- (h) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 19th March, 2025, concerning disposal of 0.0013 acres (0.0005 hectares) at Main Street, Bruff, Co. Limerick, V35WT73.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
 And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of 0.0013 acres (0.0005 hectares) at Main Street, Bruff, Co. Limerick, V35WT73, to Yvonne Kertsch, in consideration of 0.001 acres (0.0004 hectares) at Main Street, Bruff, Co. Limerick, V35FP48, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the contract and the Council to discharge Yvonne Kertsch’s reasonable legal fees regarding this disposal, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 19th March, 2025.”

- (i) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 19th March, 2025, concerning disposal of property at 121 Dalgaish Park, Moyross, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
 And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 121, Dalgaish Park, Moyross, Limerick, to Bernadette Hamilton and Robert Hamilton, in consideration of Bernadette Hamilton and Robert Hamilton transferring ownership of their property at 17 Pineview Gardens, Moyross, Limerick, subject to (1) the disposal to be by way of exchange of the above property to Limerick City and County Council (subject to necessary conveyancing requirements); and (2) Limerick City and County Council to acquire the property free of any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) and any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) on the property at 17 Pineview Gardens, Moyross, Limerick, to be transferred to the property at 121, Dalgaish Park, Moyross, Limerick; particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 19th March, 2025.”

- (j) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 19th March, 2025, concerning disposal of property at Roseville, O’Donoghue Avenue, Janesboro, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Roseville, O’Donoghue Avenue, Janesboro, Limerick, to Sheila O’Hanlon, in consideration of Sheila O’Hanlon transferring ownership of her property at 119 Mountain View, O’Malley Park, Limerick, subject to (1) the disposal to be by way of exchange of the above property to Limerick City and County Council (subject to necessary conveyancing requirements); and (2) Limerick City and County Council to acquire the property free of any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) and any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) on the property at 119 Mountain View, O’Malley Park, Limerick, to be transferred to the property at Roseville, O’Donoghue Avenue, Janesboro, Limerick; particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 19th March, 2025.”

Derelict Disposals

- (k) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025, concerning disposal of property at Kilready, Castlemahon, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Kilready, Castlemahon, Co. Limerick, to Liam Hough, for the sum of €24,000, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 12th March, 2025.”

4. Corporate Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development

(a) Executive Report

Circulated, Executive Report for the months of January and February, 2025.

The Reports were noted by the Council.

(b) Audit

(i) Statutory Audit Report 2023

Circulated, (i) Report of the Audit and Risk Committee dated 12th February, 2025, on the Statutory Audit Report for year ended 31st December, 2023, for Limerick City and County Council; (ii) Limerick City and County Council Audited Annual Financial Statement for Year ended 31st December, 2023; and (iii) Local Government Audit Service Statutory Audit Report dated 25th October, 2024, to the Members of Limerick City and County Council for the Year ended 31st December, 2023.

The Mayor raised various questions in relation to the Statutory Audit Report 2023. In response, the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee outlined that these questions had been raised by the Local Government Auditor and discussed with the Audit and Risk Committee and the Committee were satisfied to recommend the report.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee noted that it would be helpful to receive the questions in advance, due to the level of detail involved, in order to address the questions fully. The Chair stated she would be meeting with the Mayor and could discuss the responses or prepare a written report. The Chair further outlined the membership and qualifications of the Committee and expressed confidence that all relevant items were addressed in the report.

Following discussion on the role of the Audit and Risk Committee the Members agreed that queries requiring detailed answers should be forwarded to the Audit and Risk Committee in advance to allow time to consider and prepare responses.

(ii) Audit and Risk Committee Work Programme 2025

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 10th March, 2025, together with copy of Limerick City and County Council Audit and Risk Committee Work Programme 2025, as agreed by the Audit and Risk Committee at a meeting of the Committee held on 26th February, 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, the Limerick City and County Council Audit and Risk Committee Work Programme 2025, as circulated, be and is hereby adopted.”

(iii) Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2024

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 10th March, 2025, enclosing the Limerick City and County Council Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2024.

The report was noted by the Council.

(iv) Audit and Risk Committee Charter and Terms of Reference

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, dated 24th March, 2025, together with a copy of the draft Charter and Terms of Reference for Limerick City and County Council Audit and Risk Committee, as agreed by the Audit and Risk Committee at a meeting held on 26th February, 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Collins (M);
Seconded by Councillor Sheahan;
And Resolved:

“That, the Charter and Terms of Reference for Limerick City and County Council Audit and Risk Committee, as circulated, be and is hereby adopted.”

(c) Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 26th February, 2025, enclosing Draft Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 for Limerick City and County Council and including, as an Appendix, a Review of the 2024 Service Delivery Plan.

Members queried why the Annual Service Delivery Plan was prepared in the absence of the Corporate Plan, noting that the Annual Service Delivery Plan was usually aligned with the Corporate Plan. They raised concerns that the Plan was prepared in advance of the Corporate Plan being adopted.

In response to the queries raised, the Director General acknowledged that the Corporate Plan was a five-year Plan and was an extremely important document. The Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 was drafted following the adoption of the Budget and was required to progress the delivery of services in Limerick City and County Council. He recommended that it be adopted, but noted that it could be deferred with the Members’ agreement. The Members agreed to defer the adoption of the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 pending further progress on the Corporate Plan.

The Members expressed disappointment that the Corporate Plan was not finalised. They noted that the Corporate Plan was very important to the Council and queried the delay.

The Members were informed that preparatory work and engagement had taken place with Members, the Executive and staff of the Council in relation to the Corporate Plan; and it was noted that this Plan guided the work of the Council. The Deputy Director General noted that the development of the Corporate Plan was complex as Limerick is the only Local Authority with three Pillars, including the new Office of the Mayor. The external Consultants were continuing to work on the Corporate Plan, which it was hoped to have finalised following further consultation with the Elected Members.

The Meetings Administrator outlined the process to date and noted that further consultation would take place with the Members to agree the final Corporate Plan. Following discussion, it was agreed that the issue would be progressed through a workshop with Members on the Corporate Plan.

(d) Annual Report 2024

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 25th March, 2025, together with copy of Annual Report 2024 for Limerick City and County Council.

The report stated that the draft Annual Report 2024 had been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 221 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, and the Local Government (Mayor of Limerick) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2024. It set out details of the policies, programmes, services and other activities undertaken by the Council. It also gave an outline of activities to promote the interests of local communities and twinning. The final version of the Annual Report would be brought before the May Meeting of the Council for adoption.

The draft Annual Report 2024 was noted by the Council.

(e) Corporate Plan 2024-2029

It was noted that discussion on the Corporate Plan 2024-2029 had taken place earlier in the Meeting under Item No. 4 (c) – Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025.

(f) Limerick Civic Trust – Vacancy

The Meetings Administrator advised that the Council was required to consider the filling of vacancy on Limerick Civic Trust following the resignation from the Trust of the Council's nominee, Councillor Talukder.

Proposed by Councillor Slattery;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);

“That, Councillor Bridie Collins be appointed to fill the vacancy on Limerick Civic Trust consequent on the resignation from the Trust of Councillor Talukder.”

As there were no other nominations, the Príomh Chomhairleoir declared Councillor Bridie Collins appointed to fill the vacancy on Limerick Civic Trust consequent on the resignation from the Trust of Councillor Talukder.”

(g) Public Participation Network (PPN) Nominations to Strategic Policy Committees

Circulated, report of the Director, Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development Directorate dated 21st March, 2025.

The report stated that the PPN had nomination rights for the Strategic Policy Committees and PPN Limerick had sought nominations to fill a number of vacant seats. Nominations had now been received from the PPN which were outlined in the report as follows:

Strategic Policy Committee	PPN Pillar	Name of Nominee and Nominating Body
Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture	Community/Voluntary	Padraig Lohan, County Limerick Youth Theatre
Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture	Social Inclusion	Daniel Nedelcu, Dynamic Formation Association CLG
Travel and Transportation	Community/Voluntary	David Tobin, Limerick Pedestrian Network
Home and Social Development	Community/Voluntary	Eileen Irwin, BGM Community Council

The Meetings Administrator advised that there was one change to the report in relation to the PPN Nominee to the Travel and Transportation SPC, namely David Tobin, Limerick Pedestrian Network, who was representing the Environment/Conservation Pillar, and not the Community/Voluntary Pillar as outlined in the report.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Galvin;
And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the appointment of PPN representatives to Strategic Policy Committees as follows:

Strategic Policy Committee	PPN Pillar	Name of Nominee and Nominating Body
Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture	Community/Voluntary	Padraig Lohan, County Limerick Youth Theatre

Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture	Social Inclusion	Daniel Nedelcu, Dynamic Formation Association CLG
Travel and Transportation	Environment/Conservation	David Tobin, Limerick Pedestrian Network
Home and Social Development	Community/Voluntary	Eileen Irwin, BGM Community Council"

(h) Strategic Policy Committee Reports

- (i) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the **Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee** dated 20th March, 2025, in relation to Meeting of the Committee held on 19th February, 2025.

The Chairperson's report was noted by the Council.

Also circulated, report of the A/Director, Transportation and Mobility, dated 20th March, 2025, enclosing Limerick City and County Council Draft Community Hedge-Cutting Grant Scheme. The SPC was recommending that the Council adopt the Scheme.

Recommendation

"That, the Draft Community Hedge-Cutting Grant Scheme be presented to the Full Council Meeting on 31st March, 2025, for adoption."

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Collins (M), the Recommendation was agreed by the Council and the following resolution was adopted:

Proposed by Councillor Galvin;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

"That, the Community Hedge-Cutting Grant Scheme, as circulated, be and is hereby adopted."

On the proposal of Councillor Secas, seconded by Councillor Kiely, it was also agreed to amend the heading of the application form to include community groups.

- (ii) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the **Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism and Planning Strategic Policy Committee** dated 19th March, 2025, in relation to meeting of the Committee held on 3rd March, 2025.

The Chairperson's report was noted by the Council.

Recommendation

“That, this Council call on the Government to provide additional financial incentives and supports to encourage the owners of unoccupied properties located in the city centre to redevelop for commercial and/or residential purposes.”

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Collins (M), the Recommendation was agreed.

- (iii) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the **Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee** dated 14th March, 2025, in relation to Meeting of the Committee held on 11th March, 2025.

The Chairperson’s report was noted by the Council.

Also circulated, report of the Director for the Metropolitan District of Limerick dated 13th March, 2025, enclosing Executive Summary and Draft Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030. The SPC was recommending that the Council adopt the Plan.

Recommendation:

“That, the Limerick City and County Council Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030 be adopted at the next sitting of the Full Council.”

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Collins (M), the Recommendation was agreed by the Council and the following resolution was adopted:

Proposed by Councillor Galvin;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, the Limerick City and County Council Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030, as circulated, be and is hereby adopted.”

- (iv) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the **Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategic Policy Committee** dated 20th March, 2025, in relation to meeting of the Committee held on 12th March, 2025.

The Chairperson’s report was noted by the Council.

Also circulated, report of the Director, Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development dated 20th March, 2024, outlining the background to the following Recommendation from the SPC:

Recommendation:

“That, the application for accreditation to the World Health Organisation European Healthy Cities/Counties Network be considered for approval by Limerick City and County Council.”

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Collins (M), the Recommendation was agreed by the Council and the following resolution was adopted:

Proposed by Councillor Galvin;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, the application for accreditation to the World Health Organisation European Healthy Cities/Counties Network be and is hereby approved.”

- (v) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee dated 13th March, 2025, in relation to meeting of the Committee held on 13th March, 2025.

The Chairperson’s report was noted by the Council.

5. Finance, Economic Development, Digital and ICT Services

Raising of Loan to fund issuing of Local Authority Home Loans (LAHL) and Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loans (LAPR) by Limerick City and County Council to borrowers

Circulated, report of the Director, Finance, Economic Development, Digital and ICT Services dated 14th March, 2025, seeking the Council’s approval to application for sanction from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage for a loan in the amount of €5,520,000 to fund the drawdown of Local Authority Home Loans and Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loans.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);
And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to application for sanction from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, for a loan in the amount of €5,520,000 to fund the drawdown of Local Authority Home Loans and Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loans, the loan to be drawn from the Housing Finance Agency.”

6. Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development

(a) Dolores O’Riordan Music Bursary Scheme 2025

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator, dated 21st March, 2025, seeking the Council's approval to recommended allocation from the Assessment Panel under the Dolores O'Riordan Music Bursary Scheme 2025.

Proposed by Councillor O'Sullivan (O);
Seconded by Councillor O'Donovan;
And Resolved:

"That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the Dolores O'Riordan Music Bursary Award 2025, as recommended, and as set out in the report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025."

(b) Grants under the Arts Act Scheme 2025

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025, seeking the Council's approval to recommended grants, as set out in the report, under the Arts Act Scheme 2025.

Proposed by Councillor O'Sullivan (O);
Seconded by Councillor O'Donovan;
And Resolved:

"That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the payment of grants under the Arts Act Scheme 2025, as recommended, and as set out in the report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025."

(c) Individual Arts Bursary Awards 2025

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025, seeking the Council's approval to recommended allocations from the Assessment Panel under the Individual Arts Bursary Awards Scheme 2025.

Proposed by Councillor O'Sullivan (O);
Seconded by Councillor O'Donovan;
And Resolved:

"That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to recommended allocations under the Individual Arts Bursary Awards Scheme 2025, as set out in the report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025."

(d) Strategic Fund for Culture and Arts Scheme 2025

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025, seeking the Council's approval to recommended allocations under the Strategic Fund for Culture and Arts Scheme 2025.

Proposed by Councillor O'Sullivan (O);

Seconded by Councillor O'Donovan;
And Resolved:

"That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to recommended allocations under the Strategic Fund for Culture and Arts Scheme 2025, as set out in the report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025."

(e) Limerick Theatre Bursaries Award Scheme 2025

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025, seeking the Council's approval to recommended allocations from the Assessment Panel for Limerick Theatre Bursaries 2025.

Proposed by Councillor O'Sullivan (O);
Seconded by Councillor O'Donovan;
And Resolved:

"That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the recommended allocations under the Limerick Theatre Bursaries Award Scheme 2025, as set out in the report of the Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator dated 21st March, 2025."

(f) Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2024

Circulated, report of the Local Community Development Committee Chief Officer, dated 26th March, enclosing Annual Report 2024 of the Limerick Local Community Development Committee.

The Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2024 was noted by the Members.

7. Conferences

Reports on Conference / Seminar / Meeting / Event

Circulated, reports by Members who had participated at Conference / Seminar / Meeting / Event.

The reports were noted by the Council.

MAYOR'S QUESTIONS

8. Question submitted by Councillor U. Gavan

I will ask the Mayor to work with the Director General and An Garda Síochána to lead a city-wide traffic management campaign around our major education institutions and employers for the wider benefit of local residential communities who are currently suffering from car parking issues on a regular basis.

REPLY: The concerns you have raised are completely understandable, and it is clear that the impact of inconsiderate parking continues to cause issues for many residents around the city. As you will be aware, the issue of parking problems in residential areas around the University of Limerick was also raised by Councillor Elena Secas at the March Meeting of the Metropolitan District through a Notice of Motion. In response, I agreed to meet with the University of Limerick (UL) Community Liaison Group and Councillor Secas to explore possible solutions to the parking challenges in the Castletroy area.

Since November 2023, a Traffic Warden has been assigned to patrol residential areas in the city, including those near the main Third Level colleges and University Hospital Limerick. While this increased enforcement has helped to some extent in reducing parking problems, it is clear that the measures in place have not fully achieved the desired outcome.

The Council's Traffic Section remains in regular communications with An Garda Síochána regarding parking issues in residential areas and during large events in Limerick city. In 2024, the 'Think Before You Park' campaign was launched by Limerick City and County Council in collaboration with An Garda Síochána following consultation with a local disability group. This ongoing initiative highlights the obstructions and hazards caused by improper parking across Limerick City and County, emphasising the consequences for other road and footpath users. As part of this campaign, An Garda Síochána continues to enforce parking regulations across the city. Vehicles issued with fixed charge notices for parking offences are often marked with information stickers, which include a QR code directing motorists to the 'Think Before You Park' campaign page on limerick.ie

I do recognise the value of such initiatives. However, I agree that more needs to be done and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you further at a time that suits us both.

Councillor Galvin welcomed the reply and emphasised the need to make this a city-wide campaign.

9. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask the Mayor at the next Meeting of Limerick Council for an update on the membership, status and priorities of the Limerick Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board Transport Sub-Group.

REPLY: The Transport Sub-Group was formally established at the most recent meeting of the Limerick Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board, which took place on 30th September, 2024. The current membership of the Sub-Group comprises:

- John Moran, Mayor of Limerick.
- Dr. Pat Daly, Director General, Limerick City and County Council.
- Carmel Kirby, Interim Chief Executive, Clare County Council.
- David Kelly, Director, Southern Regional Assembly.

Consultation is ongoing with the Environmental Protection Agency in relation to the appointment of an additional member with expertise in climate and transport policy. It is expected that this appointment and others will be considered at the next meeting of the Delivery Board scheduled for 2nd May, 2025.

The Transport Sub-Group, at its next meeting, will convene with the aim of progressing a defined set of strategic priorities. These priorities include:

- Reviewing BusConnects Limerick and Connecting Ireland Plans.
- Reviewing the Active Travel Programme.
- Assessing progress on the delivery of the N21/N69 Limerick to Adare to Foynes Road Project.
- Reviewing progress on the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS).
- Supporting development of the Limerick City Transport Plan.
- Considering proposals for new train stations at Moyross, the Parkway, Ballysimon, Annacotty Business Park, and Adare.

QUESTIONS

Replies to the following Questions on the agenda were circulated to all Members prior to the Meeting and were therefore considered as having been dealt with:

10. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting – since 1st February, 2025, it is now illegal to own an XL Bully Dog unless you have a Certificate of Exemption – (a) how many XL Bully Dogs were destroyed; (b) how many exemptions were granted in Limerick; (c) what were the reasons for the exemptions; and (d) what steps has this Council put in place to ensure that all XL Bully Dogs are certified.

REPLY: Under the Control of Dogs (XL Bully) Regulations 2024, as of 1 February this year, it has been illegal to own an XL Bully unless you have a Certificate of Exemption.

(a) **How many XL Bully Dogs were destroyed:** as of 1 February 2025, 2 XL Bully dogs have been euthanised in the Dog Shelter.

(b) **How many exemptions were granted in Limerick:** 38 exemption certs have been issued.

(c) **What were the reasons for the exemptions:** the requirements of approval for an exemption cert were set out under the XL Bully regulations. The following documents were required:

- Application form submitted within the deadline for applications - 31/01/2025
- Copy of valid Dog Licence.
- Copy of Microchipping Certificate.
- Copy of Veterinary Confirmation of Neutering Status Form.
- Photographic Proof of Identity (Copy of Passport, Drivers Licence, public services card etc.).
- Proof of Address (Copy of Utility Bill or bank statement within previous 3 months etc.).

Applicants that supplied the required documentation within the deadline for applications were approved for an exemption.

(d) **What steps has this Council put in place to ensure that all XL Bully Dogs are certified:** it is the responsibility of each dog owner to apply for a Certificate of exemption for their XL Bully dog. In advance of the ban coming into force the Council contacted all owners that had purchased a dog licence in Limerick that noted the breed as an XL Bully, to remind them of the requirement for an exemption. In addition, there was a nationwide media campaign run by the Department of Rural and Community Affairs to highlight in XL Bully ban and the steps owners were required to take to exempt their dog.

11. Question submitted by Councillor B. Collins

I will ask at the next Meeting how many pre-planning and full planning permissions have been refused or withdrawn since the adoption of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 based on applicants residing in Level 4 settlements.

REPLY: This Question was discussed with Councillor Collins. Details of pre-planning meetings are confidential and therefore cannot be released.

The level of detail required in order to provide an answer for this Question will require additional time due to the nature of the Question. Work has commenced on the compilation of the data which will be further examined once gathered.

12. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask at the next Meeting of Limerick Council for the number of Notices to Quit received by Limerick Council across Limerick in the last 12 months per month.

REPLY: The table shows the number of Tenant-in-Situ properties the Team is working on each month. The numbers provided per month under column A show the cumulative record of cases logged since the Notices-to-Quit became evident since the eviction ban in March 2023. The numbers provided under column B record the new notifications received per month.

	A	B
Month	Cumulative Average per month since March 2023	No. of new Notice-to-Quit notifications received per month
Feb-24	578	29
Mar-24	601	17
Apr-24	626	30
May-24	645	19
Jun-24	662	6
Jul-24	675	15
Aug-24	690	20
Sep-24	713	22
Oct-24	738	25
Nov-24	754	13
Dec-24	770	17
Jan-25	787	21
Feb-25	807	17
Up to 21 st March 2025	818	3

13. Question submitted by Councillor S. Benson

I will ask at the next meeting, (i) How many vacant Council properties do we currently have (ii) What is the projected cost of refurbishing all of these properties (iii) What is this year's budget for refurbishing these properties and (iv) How much do we get from central government towards the cost, per unit.

REPLY: The number of vacant properties as of 26th March, 2025, is 226 units, of which 119 houses are Voids.

For the current 119 houses, the projected cost of refurbishing these units is €5,077,377. For units that will be returned from tenants throughout 2025, the projected average cost based on 2024 is as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Prelets	€ 40,000
1-	€ 35,000
3	€ 66,000
4	€215,000.

€2,825,000 has been allocated in the Capital budget in 2025 for Void properties and €767,672 in the Revenue budget for Pre-Letting Repairs. The total allocated budget is €3,592,672.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage will fund €11,000 towards any void which has not received funding before. For all other vacant stock, which is not a void, an application for funding can be made.

14. Question submitted by Councillor S. Benson

I will ask at the next meeting if Limerick City and County Council has a dedicated fulltime Access Officer, with appropriate seniority and training.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council has a number of Access Officers in place, each in a part-time capacity but with their own areas of responsibility in the areas of Human Resources, public realm and Council buildings. The group meet on a monthly basis to review access issues and are drafting an Accessibility Strategy for the wider organisation in conjunction with their colleagues in Community Development. The Council also runs regular Disability Awareness sessions for staff on their responsibilities in this very important area.

15. Question submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue

I will ask at the next Meeting of Limerick City and County Council that all paths and roads maintenance costs for all required works are included in pre-budget workshops in a project-by-project in Q3 and Q4 going forward.

REPLY: The Road Maintenance Works to be carried out annually are identified on the Roads Management Database on a triennial basis, as required by the Department of Transport, (2025-2027 currently in place). These roads are identified mainly using the Pavement Surface Condition Index (PSCI) rating system, which is a rating system to evaluate the condition of Regional and Local Roads in Ireland and through representations by Councillors and members of the public. Finalisation of that list is done by the presentation of the Schedule of Municipal District Works to the Municipal District for adoption. Changes will occur from time to time due to funding restrictions, identification of synergies with other departments and representations. These elements are generally finalised in January/February of the year in question and when budgets are known and allocated.

16. Question submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue

I will ask at the next Meeting if the Housing Department can set out its current projected Per Cent for Art budget across all projects regardless of stage.

REPLY: The Table below outlines the Per Cent for Art budgets approved on Limerick City and County Council Social Housing Investment Programme (SHIP)

Construction projects and Approved Housing Body Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) Construction projects as of March 2025:

Per Cent for Art Allowance on Limerick City and County Council Housing Project Budgets			
Art Budget remaining on Limerick City and County Council Approved Projects	Art Budget on Approved Housing Body Approved Projects	Projected Art Budget on Limerick City and County Council Projects (not yet Department-approved)	Projected Art Budget on Approved Housing Body projects (not yet Department-approved)
€1,272,031	€210,043	€647,500	€45,000

17. Question submitted by Councillor D. McSweeney

I will ask at the next Meeting of Limerick City and County Council for a full yearly breakdown of expenditure on consultants by the Active Travel Team since it was established.

REPLY: The average percentage of design consultancy spending on Limerick City and County Council Active Travel capital projects typically falls within the range of 5% to 10% of the total project budget.

These projects, which include infrastructure for cycling, walking, and other forms of sustainable transport, often require specialized expertise in urban planning, engineering, and environmental assessments.

Factors influencing consultancy costs on active travel projects include project complexity, geographic location, and the specific requirements of local authorities or government bodies.

Spend on design consultancy was as follows: -

2021 -	€ 699,566.81
2022 -	€ 722,052.45
2023 -	€1,407,154.37
2024 -	<u>€1,627,209.69</u>
Total -	€4,455,983.32

The overall non-payroll costs for the same period and same schemes amount to €63,495,994.75, so our consultancy fees account for 7.01% of the non-payroll costs to date which is below the expected outturn of 10% not withstanding fees are still being incurred as schemes are progressing.

18. Question submitted by Councillor S. Beasley

I will ask at the next Meeting of Limerick City and County Council over the past five years, what are the maintenance costs for Council housing stock by year and District.

REPLY: The following are the Maintenance costs for Council housing stock by year and District over the past five years:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale	€187,254	€196,165	€312,402	€186,754	€397,411
Municipal District of Cappamore- Kilmallock	€159,977	€235,318	€315,707	€404,044	€589,372
Municipal District of Newcastle West	€168,381	€178,921	€332,283	€372,871	€514,792
Metropolitan District of Limerick	€1,407,651	€1,395,288	€2,044,680	€2,525,411	€2,897,508

19. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting what percentage of our Authority's Annual Rate Revenue was derived from Wind Farms situate locally in each of the past five financial years.

REPLY: The following Table summarises the percentage of Limerick City and County Council's Annual Rate Income derived from Wind Farms situated in this Local Authority area for the past five financial years. I have also included the percentage for 2025:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Windfarm Income as a Percentage of Total Rates Income	6.46%	6.44%	6.52%	6.28%	6.04%	5.85%

20. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting how many properties our Authority had agreed to purchase in 2024 under Notice to Quit, Tenant in Situ and Rightsizing options, what the relating purchase monies amount to, and when completions are expected.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) is 'sale agreed' on 14 Tenant-in-Situ properties from 2024 in Limerick City and County.

Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) funded by Limerick City and County Council are also 'sale agreed' on 14 Tenant-in-Situ properties from 2024.

Limerick City and County Council is 'sale agreed' on four rightsizing properties from 2024.

Purchase monies are not approved by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage at this time for the 'sale agreed' properties. Therefore, completion dates are not known.

The sales relating to Tenant-in-Situ properties are on hold pending receipt of the official Circular from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage which will detail the 2025 budget allocation for Limerick City and County Council for all acquisitions including the Tenant-in-Situ Scheme.

Overall, Limerick City and County Council has 48 acquisitions on its tracker that are approaching 'sale agreed' (i.e., at proposal stage).

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has advised all Local Authorities that there will be no funding for the acquisition of properties relating to rightsizing in 2025. Alternative options are being explored currently for the four rightsizers identified above that Limerick City and County Council is 'sale agreed' with.

Once the Council receives notification on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Circular and Budget Allocation relating to the Acquisitions Programme for 2025, we will keep Elected Members informed of the specific conditions associated with it.

NOTICES OF MOTION

21. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor N. Stokes

I will move at the next Plenary Meeting of Limerick City and County Council that this Council examine the possibility of securing funding for the Irish Chamber Orchestra's Education and Community Engagement work. The funding is essential to enable them to continue their offering of programmes free-of-charge to schools and community groups, providing access to music and the arts for those who may require it.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Stokes and seconded by Councillor Hickey-O'Mara.

REPLY:

The Irish Chamber Orchestra (ICO) provides free, inclusive music education to children and young people in Limerick through its education programme. The programme is offered to circa 500 children and young people on a weekly basis and tuition is given in instruments such as violin, viola, cello and double bass. All instruments are provided by the ICO, along with high quality tuition and opportunities to perform.

Limerick City and County Council provides annual funding of €11,000 to the Irish Chamber Orchestra under the Arts programme. In 2025, work in cooperation with the Arts Office will be further developed, through the ICO providing a small number of 'Meet the Musician' workshops for Transition Year students in the Autumn. This will form part of the Limerick City and County Council Artists in Schools Scheme 2025, which is also funded by the Arts Council. In other supports, it has been agreed that quartets from the ICO will

be invited to play in two concerts under the Arts Office Excellence in Rural Arts Programme 2025.

It is the view of the Arts Office that the Irish Chamber Orchestra's education and community programme is valuable and impactful. However, the Arts Office does not have resources under its budget allocation to increase current budgeted supports to the ICO in 2025. Consideration could be given to a proposal or request for increased arts programme funding for 2026 as part of the annual Limerick City and County Council budgetary process.

Members welcomed the Motion. They commended the ICO for the work they were carrying out and queried if funding could be made available.

In response, the Director of Regeneration, Sports and Recreation outlined the support that had been given through the Regeneration Directorate and agreed to engage further with the ICO to see what other level of support could be looked at. He pointed out that it is an important programme for schools.

22. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council call for Government intervention to start the process of upgrading Newcastle West Sewerage Scheme immediately; to also put interim/temporary measures in place so that development can continue while the upgrade can take place.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Ruddle and seconded by Councillor Galvin.

In moving the Motion, Councillor Ruddle outlined the lack of capacity in the wastewater plant in the Newcastle West area which was affecting further growth and development of Newcastle West town.

Members expressed concern at the lack of capacity in the plant and emphasised the need for an immediate solution. They highlighted the number of planning permissions that could not progress due to the lack of capacity and urged the Council to engage with Uisce Éireann and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The Mayor referred to the inadequacy of the infrastructure for Limerick and informed the Members that this issue was discussed at his recent meeting with the Taoiseach, requesting the Government to expedite the plan to upgrade Newcastle West.

In response to Members' concerns, the Director of Planning and Place-Making pointed out that a solution would take some time to put in place and noted the next stage was to consider the implementation of a temporary treatment plant, highlighting that it was important to keep it as a priority. In the meantime, a meeting with Uisce Éireann had been organised to look at possible solutions. He referred to a scheme that had been implemented as a temporary measure by other local authorities and noted it as a possible solution for Limerick.

The Members thanked the Director for his response and expressed their satisfaction at a possible temporary solution, and asked to be kept up to date on progress.

23. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council calls on the Department of Education to fund all safety measures that are necessary outside all Schools in the interest of children's safety, particularly national schools, i.e. crossings, lighting, speed ramps, signage, car/bus parking.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Galvin and seconded by Councillor Collins (M).

In moving the Motion, Councillor Galvin stressed the need for safety measures around more schools as the safety of children must be a priority.

Members welcomed the Motion and agreed that the Council should call on the Department of Education for funding.

NOTICES OF MOTION IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENT PLAN:

With the permission of the Príomh Chomhairleoir, the following Notices of Motion - Nos. 24, 27 and 33 - in relation to the Development Plan - were taken together:

24. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that the Mayor of Limerick immediately commence a review of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 to expedite the development of housing in Limerick City and County.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Sheahan and seconded by Councillor Keary.

In moving the Motion, Councillor Sheahan outlined the need to expedite a review of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, emphasising the immediate need for housing and noting that the housing targets had not been met to date. He referred to the new Planning and Development Act, which had now been enacted, and queried if the Council's Development Plan was aligned with the current legislation. He referred to current zoned land and stressed the need for more residential zoning throughout Limerick city and county.

27. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor B. Collins

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council amend the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 to include the following: 'For a positive planning application for a one-off rural house outside a settlement, that the absence of affordable dwellings for purchase within a settlement be included as qualifying criteria where a housing need is demonstrated.'

The Motion was proposed by Councillor B. Collins and seconded by Councillor M. Collins.

In moving the Motion, Councillor B. Collins outlined that somebody born and reared in a Tier 4 settlement was precluded from getting permission to build outside the settlement. She emphasised the need for affordable schemes to be delivered within the settlement but, if they did not exist, she noted that persons should be allowed to build outside the settlement if a site was available.

33. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Keary

I will move at the March Meeting of Limerick City and County Council that the Forward Planning Section of this Authority immediately commence a review of the current Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 with a view to amending Planning Policies and a review of the current list of Protected Structures.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Keary and seconded by Councillor O'Donovan.

In moving the Motion, Councillor Keary welcomed the other two Motions and agreed that a review of the Limerick Development Plan was required.

REPLY to Notice of Motion No. 24 – Councillor John Sheahan

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), work on the preparation of a new Development Plan must commence no later than four years after the adoption of the previous Development Plan. Therefore, the statutory process for the next Development Plan will commence in Q2 2026 and be completed within two years thereafter. The Section 28, Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities, recommend that the preparatory work begins at least one year prior to the formal commencement of the Plan review. This work will begin in Q2 2025 resulting in non-statutory work commencing imminently.

This preparatory phase encompasses significant workloads, including for example the surveying of all settlements, the gathering and analysis of data and cross-sector engagement, the drafting of the Baseline Report, Issues Papers and working papers for the Core Strategy and all chapters of the Written Statement, Housing Strategy, Retail Strategy, Economic Strategy, Building Heights Strategy, the carrying out of the review of the Record of Protected Structures and the drafting of Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and scoping of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.

REPLY to Notice of Motion No. 27 – Councillor B. Collins

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Development Plan must be materially consistent with the policies and objectives of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region, the Plan must also be in accordance with National Planning

Policy Guidance issued by the Government. The amendment proposed is not in accordance with the rural housing policies and objectives of the National Planning, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, or any Section 28 Planning Guidance and would therefore be contrary to Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

REPLY to Notice of Motion No. 33 – Councillor S. Keary

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), work on the preparation of a new Development Plan must commence no later than four years after the adoption of the previous Development Plan. Therefore, the statutory process for the next Development Plan will commence in Q2 2026 and be completed within two years thereafter. The Section 28, Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities, recommend that the preparatory work begins at least one year prior to the formal commencement of the Plan review. This work will begin in Q2 2025 resulting in non-statutory work commencing imminently.

This preparatory phase encompasses significant workloads, including for example the surveying of all settlements, the gathering and analysis of data and cross-sector engagement, the drafting of the Baseline Report, Issues Papers and working papers for the Core Strategy and all chapters of the Written Statement, Housing Strategy, Retail Strategy, Economic Strategy, Building Heights Strategy, the carrying out of the review of the Record of Protected Structures and the drafting of Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and scoping of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.

Members welcomed the Motions and agreed that a review of Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 was required. Members queried the process around initiating a review, requested clarity on the number of Members required to approve a variation to a Development Plan and asked if the Mayor can commence a review.

In response to the queries raised by the Members, the Director of Planning and Place-Making informed the meeting that the Council are beginning the review process, which will include background research work as preparatory work for the new Development Plan, which would take 9 months. This process must be completed to enable commencement of the statutory work on the new Limerick Development Plan within the required statutory timeframe. He advised that the Council will need new housing figures from the Department before the formal process can commence.

The Senior Planner, Forward Planning and Public Realm, advised the Members that the statutory process for the development plan takes 2 years and it is proposed that this will commence in quarter 1 next year. However, the background preparatory work will commence this year.

The Director of Planning and Place-Making advised that the commencement of a variation to the Limerick Development Plan is an executive function. However, under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the Members of a Planning

Authority may at any time, for stated reasons, submit a resolution to the Mayor of the Planning Authority, requesting him to prepare a report on a proposal by them to initiate a process to consider the variation of the Development Plan where three-quarters of the Members of the Authority have approved such resolution. The Mayor in response shall then submit a report to the Members within 4 weeks.

Councillor Teskey referred to his recent Motion in relation to wind farms and requested the Mayor to meet with the residents of Coolcappa to discuss the matter. In response, the Mayor agreed to meet with the residents of Coolcappa.

The Executive agreed to organise a workshop with the Members to discuss the subject of the Motions in further detail.

Suspension of Standing Order No. 4: The Príomh Chomhairleoir drew attention to the time which was approaching 5.30 p.m. and on the proposal of Councillor Slattery, seconded by Councillor Stokes, Standing Order No. 4 was suspended in order to complete the agenda.

25. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council process rent assessments for people in Council properties in a timely manner to avoid tenants receiving backdated bills for arrears.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Slattery and seconded by Councillor Kiely.

REPLY: The Rents Department of the Housing Directorate currently has responsibility for 5,847 tenanted houses, which generated an income of €20.6m for 2024.

The Standard Letting agreement stipulates that it is the responsibility of the tenant to immediately inform the Council of any changes to household composition and/or to their income, as soon as any change occurs. This is emphasised to tenants when they are i) allocated a house and ii) as part of the quarterly rent statement process

However, not all tenants comply fully with this provision which can lead to untimely delays and historic arrears accumulating.

In late 2023, the Rents Unit commenced a global rent review in trying to update household composition and income details for all tenancies, to ensure all households are dealt with on an equitable basis. In the majority of cases, where all necessary documentation was submitted etc. a timely response was forthcoming in terms of any changes accruing to amount of rent payable. However, in instances where necessary supporting documentation was not submitted, it was often the case that the Rents Unit had to pursue same through letters, phone calls etc. and, in some cases, this could be a lengthy process.

At this stage the vast majority of forms have been fully assessed and the new rent has been notified to the tenant, including arrears and refunds of overpayments if applicable. If any member wishes to raise any particular case, with the consent of the tenant, the individual circumstances of the case can be reviewed with the relevant Revenue Collector and Administrative Officer with responsibility for the Rents Department.

Aside from the global rent review the Rents Department continually processes tenant led rent assessments on an ongoing basis. All tenant led rent assessments are processed without delay.

Following the completion of the global rent review, the Rents Department will review its policies, processes and procedures in relation to future global rent reviews in order to maximise efficiencies. The Rents Department is also exploring the digitalisation of work processes including the global rent review, in order to allow the tenant complete rent updates in an on-line format; this should also provide further efficiencies.

In reply to concerns raised, the Director of Housing agreed to review the internal process for the rent assessments.

26. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor U. Gavan

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council (a) Calls on the Government to enact the Occupied Territories Bill in full, and (b) Agrees to fly the Palestinian flag outside Merchant's Quay as a sign of solidarity with the people of Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Note: (b) Referred to Protocol Committee.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Gavan and seconded by Councillor E. O'Donovan. A discussion took place on part b of the Motion, which was referred to the next meeting of the Protocol Committee.

28. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will move at the next meeting of Limerick Council that this Council write to the Minister for Housing requesting a funding guarantee for the tenant-in-situ scheme for 2025, and to allow Limerick Council the maximum flexibility on how this scheme is operated.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor O'Donovan and seconded by Councillor Benson.

29. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Benson

I will move at the next meeting that we write to the National Transport Authority and Minister for Transport to ask if additional funding will be made available for road repairs, particularly for local roads through housing estates, on bus routes. And that an inspection be carried out ahead of the rollout of bus connects, to ensure that the roads on all routes

are of suitable standard to cater for the heavier electric fleet and increased frequency, and where necessary roads will be upgraded and funding will be provided to maintain these routes into the future.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Benson and seconded by Councillor Gavan.

30. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council write to the Minister for Transport, Darragh O'Brien, T.D., to propose that the BusConnects Limerick is implemented and made operational without delay. I understand that the majority of the required infrastructure is in place for this transformative network.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Donoghue and seconded by Councillor O'Donovan.

31. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Beasley

I will move at the next Meeting that a space be gifted by Limerick City and County Council for Limerick Lace to have a location where they can showcase their wares for tourists and interested parties.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Beasley and seconded by Councillor Hickey-O'Mara.

REPLY: Limerick Museum holds the largest known collection of Limerick Lace in existence. This includes the Florence Vere O'Brien Collection, the Maude Kearney Collection and a significant collection of lace from the Presentation Convent. The Museum also holds a comprehensive collection of lace patterns from the above collections. It includes medals and awards won by Limerick Lace over the years, including the 1851 medal from the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace London.

A substantial part of the Lace Collection is on permanent display in the Museum and it is rotated on a regular basis to afford access to all, including tourists and interested parties. Limerick Lace is a key element in the Museum offer and the Museum highlights different aspects of the collection in its annual exhibitions; for example, in August 2025, an exhibition showing a cross-section of the collection, with additional modern pieces from present-day lace makers, will be on display.

Limerick Lace is a fragile, unique and valuable collection which needs specialist care, provided by the curatorial staff of Limerick Museum. A separate location would require a considerable capital and revenue budget and a staffing resource to provide a similar offer. It is therefore considered that Limerick Museum affords the most appropriate and accessible location to showcase Limerick Lace to all.

32. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Hickey-O'Mara

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council engage the services of a Sustainability Officer to carry out a sustainability audit of Riverfest 2025, and all Limerick Council run Festivals and Events thereafter, in order to minimise the environmental impact, thereby aligning with the sustainability goals of the Limerick City and County Council Festival and Events Strategy 2023-2027.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Hickey-O'Mara and seconded by Councillor O'Donovan.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council Festivals and Events have secured the services of a Sustainability Auditor for Riverfest 2025. The Auditor will report on a range of sustainability issues, including but not limited to waste management, energy usage and the carbon footprint of the festival. On receipt of the Auditor's Sustainability Report for Riverfest 2025, Festivals and Events will review the remaining Limerick Council-run Festivals and Events in line with the sustainability goals.

34. Correspondence

The Correspondence circulated with the agenda was taken as read.

MAYOR/DIRECTOR GENERAL ORDERS:

The Register of Orders made by the Mayor or the Director General up to the date of the Meeting was available on SharePoint for inspection by the Members

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT:

The Register of Decisions on Applications under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, was also available on SharePoint for inspection by the Members.

Signed:

Príomh Chomhairleoir

Date:
