Deputy Darragh O' Brien T.D
Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage
Custom House
Dublin 1.   29th September 2020

Dear Minister,

At the monthly meeting of Louth County Council held on Monday, 21st September, the members agreed to write to you to state our concerns around the impact the COVID-19 crisis has had on the financial position of the Council and will continue to have into the future.

The financial shortfall will inevitably have a negative impact on the many essential services that the Council provide to the community of county Louth.

The Council has had significant reductions in a wide range of income sources such as housing rents, planning fees, parking fines & charges and many other areas. Rates collection is also being impacted significantly by the COVID-19 crisis with a very significant increase in vacancies particularly in the hospitality sector in our towns. This is in addition to the strong possibility that there will be a reduction in the collection rates as has been the case with previous economic downturns.

Louth County Council has also had to increase it's spending in order to address the challenge of COVID-19, spending that was not foreseen when we agreed the budget for 2021 in November of last year. There will ongoing additional expenditure associated with COVID-19 measures for the remainder of this crisis.

As members of this Council, we are very aware of the damaging effect any reduction in financial resources for Louth County Council will have on the communities we serve. It was the local authority sector that coordinated the community call initiative, providing essential support to the most vulnerable members of society.

I urge you Minister to ensure supports are put in place to compensate Louth County Council and all local authorities for the negative financial impact of COVID-19 and ensure that here is no reduction in the essential services provided by the Council to the community as a result of this crisis

Cllr. Dolores Minogue
Cathaoirleach

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Cuirfear fáilte roimh chomhfhreagras Gaeilge - Correspondence in Irish is welcome