

No-one injured in St Stephen's Day house fire

THE occupants of a house at Readiypenny had a lucky escape when their home was badly damaged by fire on St Stephen's Day.

Firefighters from Dundalk and Ardee attended the blaze which broke out at the property just off the N52 between Ardee and Dundalk at Readiypenny Cross shortly before lunchtime.

The two units spent three hours bringing the fire under control and fortunately no-one was injured although the property was extensively damaged. The road was also closed for a time.



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

Notice of Application to An Bord Pleanála for Approval Louth County Council

Pursuant to Section 177AE(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (amended) and the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), notice is hereby given that Louth County Council proposes to make an application for approval to an Bord Pleanála to carry out development which involves the construction of the Boyne Greenway - North Bank, in the town lands of Mell and Moneymore, Drogheda, Co Louth. The proposed development consists of:

- The construction of a new pathway (c. 650 m in length) and upgrades to an existing footpath (widening the existing footpath from 2m to 3m over a length of c. 950m) over a total length of c. 1.6km for pedestrians and cyclists to include elements of resurfacing, fencing, access gateways, road signs and markings, drainage, public lighting, and furnishing of designated locations with benches, litter bins and bicycle racks and all associated ancillary and accommodation works.
- A section of the existing footpath to be upgraded is located within the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002299).

A Natura Impact Statement has been prepared in respect of the proposed development. An Bord Pleanála, in relation to an application for approval under section 177AE, of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, may give approval to the application for development with or without conditions or may refuse the application for development.

The Natura Impact Statement, together with Plans and Particulars of the proposed development, will be available for inspection free of charge and can be downloaded free of charge at www.louthcoco.ie or may be purchased on payment of a small fee (which fee shall not exceed the reasonable cost of making such a copy), during normal office hours 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday from Tuesday 3rd January 2023 until Friday 17th February 2023 at

- County Hall, Millennium Centre, St Alphonsus Street, Dundalk, Co Louth
- County Council Offices, Fair Street, Drogheda, Co Louth or
- The consultation portal of Louth County Council <https://consult.louthcoco.ie/>

Submissions or observations may be made to An Bord Pleanála on the proposed development in relation to:

- The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the area concerned,
- The likely effects on the environment of the proposed development, and
- The likely significant effects of the proposed development on a European site, if carried out.

Any submissions or observations may be made in writing to An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, DO1 V902 not later than Friday 17th February 2023 at 5.30 pm.

A person may question the validity of any such decision by the Board by way of an application for judicial review under Order 84 of the Rules of the Superior Courts (S.I. No. 15 of 1986) in accordance with Section 50 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Practical information on the review mechanism can be accessed under the heading Publications - Judicial Review Notice on the Board's website www.pleanala.ie or on the Citizens information Service website www.citizensinformation.ie

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Date 28th December 2022

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PARTY TIME



Elizabeth Kieran and Brenda Schuls at the Christmas party night in The Imperial Hotel.

Teenage boy jailed for three years for rape of his niece and cousin

A teenage boy who repeatedly sexually abused his niece and cousin has been handed a three-year period of detention.

The Louth teenager (17) pleaded guilty to four counts of anal rape, one count of rape, two counts of sexual exploitation and one count of sexual assault of the two girls at his home address on dates between November 2019 and March 2020.

He was 14 at the time of the offending, while the girls were aged between nine and 10.

At the Central Criminal Court last Wednesday, Ms Justice Mary Ellen Ring said this was a "breach of trust" of his young relatives and their families.

She noted the offending had taken place in the boy's home, a place considered a "safe space by the children and their parents".

At an earlier sentencing hearing, Ms Justice Ring said she was concerned that there was no risk assessment carried out in terms of how likely the boy is to offend in the future.

"I'm concerned that an otherwise blameless child, as he was then, gets involved in what is the most serious of crimes - short of murder - the most serious offending that comes before the courts in this country," Ms Justice Ring said.

Ms Justice Ring said the boy had "taken advantage" of the girls and caused "serious damage" to them.

Setting a headline sentence of four and half years' detention, Ms Justice Ring indicated she would impose a sentence of nine years on an adult for this offending.

Ms Justice Ring noted the mitigating factors include the boy's guilty plea, his prior good character, expressions of remorse and his engagement with relevant services.

She handed the boy three years detention and ordered him to come under the supervision of the Probation Services for 18 months post-release.

Ms Justice Ring said the court had to be "cautious" about the boy's risk of future re-offending, due to the absence of a risk assessment.

It is expected that the boy will be allowed to remain in Oberstown until he has completed his exams, before being moved into an adult prison.

Vincent Heneghan SC, defending, told the court that Tusla have stated they have no concerns about child protection issues in relation to the boy's domestic situation.

The court previously heard that the two girls spent a lot of time in their relatives' house, where the boy lived.

Under the guise of letting the girls play his X-Box in his bedroom, the boy made them take turns lying face down on the bed and anally

raped them in front of each other. He also vaginally raped one of the girls, which made her bleed and caused her great upset, the court heard. He also sexually assaulted her.

The boy sent the other girl photographs of his erect penis and made her watch adult pornography. A local detective told Dominic McGinn SC, prosecuting, that he made the child take screenshots of the pornography and send them to him as proof that she had viewed it.

The abuse came to light in April 2020 when that girl's sisters saw messages on her phone asking the boy to stop sending her photographs of his penis.

When confronted by his older sister - one of the child's mothers - about the abuse, the boy initially denied it before eventually saying he didn't know why he did it. When interviewed by gardai in November 2021, he said nothing of evidential value.

He entered guilty pleas shortly before he was due to stand trial earlier this year. He has no previous convictions.

Mr Heneghan said his client was successful in school and excelled at sports. He came from a stable, close family background and his parents, who were present in court, are supportive of him.

A Probation Services report found the boy has not come to grips with what motivated him to abuse his relatives. Mr Heneghan said the boy was exposed to pornography around the age of 12 or 13, which could be a factor in his offending.

The boy has career plans and is anxious to complete his Leaving Cert, the court heard.

When interviewed by specialist gardai, the girls both outlined the extent of the abuse inflicted on them. They did not provide victim impact statements to the court and neither of them has received counselling, although their parents will get it for them if they need it, the court heard.

The parents of one girl said she has never spoken of it since and they did not wish to retraumatise her, while the other was aware of court proceedings but did not wish to attend, the detective said.

The abuse caused a breakdown of what was a previously close family, Mr Heneghan told the court.

Ms Justice Ring ordered the boy to have no contact with the victims in any form while in custody or under the supervision of the Probation Services.

She said she would like to impose restrictions on the boy's use of social media, computers and the internet, but that it was not practical.

IN BRIEF

€16,500 lucky punt lotto win

A punter in County Louth has pulled off a remarkable coup on the Lotto just in time for Christmas after a modest investment saw them land a five-figure windfall.

The anonymous winner struck a small €0.50 bet in a BoyleSports shop, picking four numbers to be drawn in the main EuroMillions draw last Tuesday before Christmas.

They opted for numbers 1, 17, 20 and 27 and faced mammoth odds of 33,000/1 against all four rolling out of the machine. But the odds started to tumble quickly as the draw got under way and in the blink of an eye all four had landed, triggering the tasty payout.

The stunning run of fortune allowed the lucky winner to return to the shop and swap their betslip for a whopping total of €16,500.50.

Lawrence Lyons, Spokesperson for BoyleSports said: "We send huge congratulations to our customer in County Louth who couldn't have picked a better time to take a chance on their lucky numbers. With €16,500 profit in the bank, a bit of small change has gone a very long way and we hope they enjoy a memorable Christmas."

Disposal of land near N1

MEMBERS of Louth County Council have approved the sale of two small plots of land left over from the construction of the N1 dual carriageway.

Director of Service Mr Joe McGuinness told councillors at the December meeting of the local authority that one plot at Drumnasilla, had a market value of €500 and the other at Junction 20, Flurry River, Dromad, was valued at €1,000.

FASN 5k on new year's day

LOOKING for a good way to run off the excesses of Christmas feasting? Then look no further than the FASN 5k and Family Fun Run which takes place on New Year's Day in Dundalk.

Organised in conjunction with An Garda Síochána, Louth Division, the event is a fund-raiser for the Family Addiction Support Network, a non-profit organisation that provides support and education to families living with the effects of a loved one's addiction.

Founded in 2001, the Dundalk-based group operates across four counties in the Northeast - Louth, Meath, Cavan and Monaghan.

Their work is peer-led is carried out on an entirely voluntary basis with no paid staff.

The FASN 5k will form part of a fundraising campaign to address a shortfall in funding and maintain their services.

In addition, they also hope to raise awareness of the organisation and highlight the assistance they provide to communities in the Northeast.

The 5k and Family Fun Run sets off from The Friary Hall at 12pm, with registration via myrunresult.com. Fees are €20 per adult including t-shirt and €30 per family of two adults (chipped) and two children (non-chipped).