

**Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee
Environmental Protection, Climate Action & Energy
Held on Friday 4th September 2020
Remotely by MS Teams**

In the Chair: Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh

In Attendance: Cllr. Deirdre Cullen, Cllr. David Fitzgerald, Cllr. Maria Dollard, James Murphy, Noel O'Donoghue, Laurence Conroy, John Hurley

Also Present: Mr. Sean McKeown, Director of Service
Mr. Frank Stafford, A/Senior Engineer
Mr. Eamonn Morrissey, Executive Chemist
Mr. Declan Keogh, Energy Officer
Ms. Catherine Millea, Senior Staff Officer

Apologies: Cllr Joe Lyons, Cllr Denis Hynes, Mr. Shem Caulfield, Bernadette Moloney

Before the meeting commenced Chairperson, Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh offered sympathies to Frank Stafford on the recent loss of his Father.

Item 1 **Minutes of SPC 4 Meeting held on 9th December 2019**
Proposed by the Chairperson Mary Hilda Cavanagh, seconded by James Murphy and agreed: "that the minutes of SPC5 meeting held on the 9th December, 2019, a copy of which was circulated to each member with the Agenda, is hereby adopted".

Item 2 **Agenda**
Sean McKeown gave an outline of the Agenda for the meeting as follows:

- Environment Complaints experience since Covid-19
- Operation of Bring Bank Recycling Facilities and experience since Covid
- Operation of Dunmore Civic Amenity Centre and experience since Covid-19
- Performance Indicator – 3 bins / waste collector usage/ restrictions on use of refuse bags
- Enforcement – Fines / FPN / Notices
- Update on ADI Funding and projects approved
- Amenity Grants
- Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park
- Climate Adaptation Plan
- Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO)
- Consideration of Policy Issues
- Correspondence
- Future Work Programme
- Any Other Business
- Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that a written Progress Report would issue in advance of the next meeting to give members an opportunity to review issues to be discussed in advance of the meeting.

Item 3 Environment Complaints experience since Covid-19

Frank Stafford gave an update.

- Each complaint is logged on Customer Relations Management System (CRM), given a unique ticket number and assigned to appropriate staff member, investigated, action taken and once resolved closed on the system.
- the number of environmental complaints logged on the CRM since Covid restrictions were introduced in mid-March have increased by 30% to 599 from 461 for the same period in 2019. 56% of complaints received related to littering and illegal dumping.
- The Council has run a number of media campaigns via print, radio and online social media platforms to help combat this trend.
- Council currently running a regional awareness campaign in conjunction with Wexford, Carlow and Waterford local authorities targeting roadside litter. The campaign focuses on peer pressure to ‘call out litter louts.’

Item 4 Operation of Bring Bank Recycling Facilities and experience since Covid-19

Frank Stafford gave an update.

- 46 Bring Centres across the City and County
- Service provider for glass is Glassco Ltd – collect and recycle
- 50% increase in volumes collected since mid-March - total of 1,338 tons collected
- Annual Budget will be insufficient to meet increased costs

Item 5 Operation of Dunmore Civic Amenity Centre (CAS) and experience since Covid-19

Frank Stafford gave an update.

- Increase in numbers availing of the facility
- Increase of 7% in tonnages year to-date – 3,150 tones collected
- Full staff compliment working – social distancing being observed

Chairperson, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, expressed her praise for the staff at Dunmore CAS. This was endorsed by other members of the SPC.

Item 6 Performance Indicator – 3 bins/waste collector usage/restrictions on use of refuse bags

Eamonn Morrissey gave an update.

- Private households in populations over 500 are obligated to have a 3 bin service
- 9 authorised waste collectors licenced to provide a service in County Kilkenny
- Household Surveys – a new “postcard” has been created which will be distributed to selected households. Postcard includes a link to the household survey and can also be downloaded to a smart phone
- Need to raise awareness of the “Man in the Van” who holds no Waste Collection Permit
- Raise awareness of public responsibility with regard to waste disposal

A discussion took place around 3 bin collection service.

Item 7 Enforcement – Fines/FPN/Notices

Eamonn Morrissey gave an update

- A number of planned check points which had been planned for 2020 had to be cancelled due to Covid-19
- Need for alternative methods
- Fixed Penalty Notices - €500 fine if in breach
- Section 55 Notices – Unauthorised sites – 6 issued to date in 2020
- Section 14 Notices – power to instruct people what to do with waste – 12 issued to date in 2020
- 186 litter fines issued to date in 2020 – large percentage relate to dumping at Bring Centres and illegal signs
- Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) – plan submitted to EPA – Plan received a rating of High

Item 8 Update on Anti Dumping Initiative Funding and projects approved

Eamonn Morrissey gave an update and advised that funding has been secured for 11 Projects including –

- Extra CCTV
- Bulky Furniture Day
- Multi agency response to black spot areas
- Bikes for Africa
- Clean-ups organised in various housing estates
- Clean up organised on area adjacent to R448

Item 9 Amenity Grants

- 116 Organisations approved for funding – Average grant c€900
- Supports landscaping, maintenance and development of open spaces

Item 10 Ferrybank Amenity Park

Sean McKeown gave an update

- Cost of development is c€640,000
- LIHAF funding approved (50% of costs) and co-funded between KCC (25%) and WCCC (25%)
- Due to be completed end September
- Official opening to be planned within Covid restrictions

Item 11 Climate Adaptation Plan

Sean McKeown gave an update.

- all LAs adopted a 5-year Climate Adaptation Plan Sep 2019
- main objective is to change the way we work and mainstream climate actions across every section of the organisation
- Plan has 116 Actions across 5 themes:
 1. Buildings & Energy

- for example energy efficiency in KCC buildings
- 33% reduction in energy achieved
- Develop a Public Lighting Upgrade Plan – circa 50% of lights converted
- 2. Transport:
- for example encourage modal shift away from use of private cars
- Appointment of a Cycling Officer
- Cycle Friendly Employer Initiative
- 3. Flood Resilience:
- Area with biggest impact in adaptation
- 6 OPW funded Projects
- Project Office in place – staff in place + consultants appointed Graig and Ballyragget
- 4. Resource Management:
- 2019 Removal of Single-Use Plastic from LA buildings
- 5. Nature & Communities
- Support climate change adaptation in schools with Green Schools Flags and Biodiversity initiatives and pollinator friendly plans.

Item 12 Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO)

Sean McKeown gave an update and advised that Carol McCarthy (LAWPRO) would attend a meeting of the SPC in future to update

- LAWPRO is a shared service, jointly managed by KCC & Tipp CoCo – HQ Tipp
- 100% funded by Dept
- key objective is to help communities become actively involved in protecting water quality
- implementation of 190 priority areas of actions in National River Basin Management Plan
- Catchment Assessment Team & Communities Office and scientists establish what is specific reason for risk and what action required; engage with local communities on actions
- 60 staff in 13 locations across 5 Regions
- 5 LAWPRO staff located in KCC fully funded by the Dept
- 3rd RBMP – business case to Dept to extend LAWPRO
- we will arrange for a future presentation from Carol McCarthy, LWAPRO

Item 13 Consideration of Policy Issues

Horse Bye-laws

Frank Stafford gave an update

- Current bye-laws in force – 2015
- New Draft bye-laws currently with Solicitor
- Introduction of exclusion zones within the City – 25 streets
- Streets agreed with Gardai
- New signage needed – need to look at implications of same
- Enforcement – gather evidence, issue of fines, Fixed Penalty Notice, courts
- Newly established Animal Welfare Charter Committee

A discussion took place with contributions from Mary Hilda Cavanagh, James Murphy, Noel O'Donoghue and Sean McKeown.

Frank Stafford advised the meeting that 15 landowners have signed up to allow Kilkenny County Council to seize horses from their private lands. He also advised that horses seized are quickly replaced. Kilkenny County Council makes every effort to re-home any horses seized.

European Climate Alliance

Sean McKeown gave an update:

- Alliance members commit to reduce CO2 emissions by 10% every 5 years
- Wexford and Carlow local authorities have already agreed to become members
- Opens access to network of expertise

The SPC unanimously agreed to recommend that KCC join the European Climate Alliance.

Item 14 Correspondence

- Sean McKeown advised the meeting that the Department of Agriculture (DAFM) wrote to all Local Authorities in relation to noxious weeds. Sean advised that the Council has informed all Area Offices and that the Council has taken action to remove ragwort on our own lands
- Sean McKeown advised the meeting of the newly established Animal Welfare Charter Committee. The ISPCA has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with DAFM in relation to 17 counties which grants ISPCA Inspectors authorised officer status and allows them to deal with cases of animal health and welfare. Kilkenny is not one of the counties covered under the SLA. Sean McKeown sought approval to write to ISPCA and DAFM to have Kilkenny included under the SLA – Frank Stafford advised the meeting that the environment section has records kept of animal cruelty which will support the Council's letter.

A discussion took place around animal welfare, the need to engage with horse owners and the ongoing issues of education around horse ownership, with contributions from James Murphy, Chairperson Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Noel O'Donoghue and Cllr Maria Dollard.

Item 14 Future Work Programme

Litter Management Plan

- Statutory requirement to prepare a new plan every 3 years
- Bernadette Moloney to attend next meeting and update SPC members on implementation of current plan and process for preparing new plan
- Draft Plan will come before SPC members for their observations

Dunmore Recreational & Biodiversity Park

- Application for funding under ORIS to be made in November 2020
- Design Consultants recently appointed
- Emphasis to be placed on recreational uses – walking, running cycling, dog friendly spaces along with educational offerings
- Create connectivity back into the city

Silaire Wood Boardwalk

- Replacement of defective timber boardwalk
- Funding under ORIS
- Contract awarded August 2020
- Use of recycled plastic – commitment to sustainability, reuse/repurpose – plus reuse by community of defective timber boardwalk

Burial Ground Strategy

- Council has 14 active burial grounds and 150 historical burial grounds
- Present a significant challenge to the Council
- St. Kieran's Cemetery – uncoffined burials to meet changing need of the community
- Columbarium wall proposal

Greenway Project

- Detailed design stage
- 24 kms of old railway lines
- Clearance of vegetation carried out – lifting of rails and sleepers has commenced
- Part 8 planning applications for Greenway carparks to facilitate access to Greenway at Raheen, NewRoss, Ballyverneen, Glenmore are currently live – submissions invited from public
- Council liaising with landowners along the route
- Project website to launch in coming weeks
- Opening date of Spring 2022

A discussion took place around the Greenway Project and all members of the meeting were strongly in favour of the project

ISO 50001

- International standard
- Energy team working towards ISO 50001 certification
- Energy team working on final stages of the Performance evaluation and auditing sections

Item 15 AOB

There was no other business.

Item 16 Date of next meeting

The date for the next meeting was set as Friday 4th December, 2020 at 11am