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**Climate Action**

**Strategic Policy Committee**

Minutes of Meeting held on the

 11th May 2022 at 10:00am via MS Teams

**Councillors Present:** Bill Clear (Chair), Peter Hamilton, Ciara Galvin, Kevin Duffy,

 Brendan Wyse

**Sectoral Interests:** Sinead Ronan

**Officials Present:** Joe Boland, Paula O’Rourke, Ciara O’Flynn, Paul Regan,

 Marie Callaghan

**Also Present:** Eugene Conlan, Manager Dunleer Energy Team

**Apologies:** Judith Browne, Tom Malone

1. **Minutes**

Minutes of meeting of the 9th February 2022 were adopted.

1. **Matters Arising**

No matters arising.

1. **Update from Climate Action Office**

Recently Launched

* The Local Just Transition Plan for West Kildare on radio and newspaper
* The Climate Innovation Fund on the Consultation Portal

Ongoing Projects

* Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan (SECAP)
* Alternative Maintenance of Public Amenity Open Spaces
* Agri Tourism Surveying Events
* Branding

Awarded Funding

* “We hold the power” - €10k from Creative Ireland

A collaborative community art place

* “Stitching the Community Together” - €30k from the Creativity in Older Age Scheme

An intergenerational art programme between nursing homes and schools

1. **Presentation from Eugene Conlan, Manager of the Dunleer Energy Team on Sustainable Energy Communities (SECs) activation and opportunity creation**

Eugene Conlon is the manager and founding member of Dunleer Sustainable Energy Community in County Louth. He has been involved in community work since 1975, a Member of Louth’s Climate SPC and a Mentor for SECs in Louth.

He set out the profile of Dunleer SEC – established 2015, established Not for Profit Structure in 2020, Trading Name is The Energy Team. Objectives are 1. Educate, 2 Retrofit and 3 Generate. He set out their leadership role – collaboration, partnership between key players, capacity building.

A community led approach

* Education of homeowners, communities and Businesses
* Community energy upgrades programme
* Measure success
* Future focus – build on communities

Partners on Community energy upgrades are

* SESYSTEMS – 15 years experience, quality installs, carry financial rise for retrofit
* SEAI – Channel for grants, Authority

Achievements of Dunleer SEC

* Winners of the SEAI Inspiration Energy Community Award 2020
* Education of 1,000 people in 6 counties
* Retrofitted 310 premises across north East
* Offer One Stop Shop solution
* Employs three staff
* 2,156 tonnes of CO2 taken out of atmosphere
* 11,399,02 kWh of energy saved

Listening

* Meeting Homeowners
* National mentoring network
* Connections with Local Authorities
* Twinned with Allheim Germany

Feedback

* Homeowners want to take action on climate change but unsure how to
* Homeowners and communities want to get things done ACTIONS
* People need support and guidance
* Public Representatives and Local Authority are key

Kildare’s Strengths on Climate Change

* Staff with interest and drive
* Public Representatives interested
* Key player in climate change
* Good foundation of SECs

Kildare – Building connections and Understanding

* Working closely with Emer Conway, SEC Kildare mentor
* Delivered education presentation to some members of the SECs
* Contact with Public Representatives
* Contact with community workers
* Meeting in Dunleer with Joe Boland, Paula O’Rourke, Paul Murphy CARO
* Today’s presentation

Benefits to joining the network

* Mentoring
* Learning supports
* Learn from communities who have already conducted local energy projects
* Start thinking about energy use in your own community in an informed way
* Learn from energy experts

Objectives

* The Energy Team will provide support and guidance to 4 SECs on how to undertake a community home energy upgrade programme
* Each SEC will identify a small number of homes – 5
* The energy team will include homes from the Kildare SECs in an application to SEAI
* Develop competence and capacity in Kildare to deliver programme

SEC selection

* Well established SECs
* These SEC completed an energy assessment of their area
* Start with small number of SECs and then expand

Community Activation Session

* Saturday 21st May 2022, at 10am in Solas Bhride, Kildare Town
* Target Groups – Kilcullen, Maynooth, Clane and Monasterevin SECs

Suggestions for this SPC

* As public reps, reps of other organisation and LA staff you have enormous influence
* Build competence and capacity in Kildare
* Be seen to inspire, facilitate and resource the growth of actions on the ground

A discussion took place after the presentation in regard to

* Paperwork – amount of red tape involved – now online
* Energy Master plan
* Grants – challenge to paying first and then grant payback
* Constant improvements – maybe every 6 months
* Energy Agency – technical and business skills needed
* Voluntary/community groups Nervous about Partnerships
* Identification of derelict buildings for inclusion in projects
* Retrofitting community properties as well as homes
* How to proceed with town like Celbridge – population 20,000
* SEAI pay project manager fees of 7%
* Difference in grants – fuel allowance received 70%, waged household 35%
* Identify and select houses likely to success,
* Business grants – Renewable Energy Support Scheme

Cllr Bill Clear thanked Eugene Conlon for his very informative presentation.

1. **Presentation from Paul Regan, CARO M&E Regional Assistant**

**on the GAA Green Clubs Initiative**

The Initiative initially started in 2019 in Carlow which led to discussions with CARO and then agreement between the GAA and the CCMA. The aim is to progress several projects and engage with expert partners.

The programme is a partnership between GAA, LGFA and Camoige Association. It will promote sustainability awareness and engagement; it will support cubs; foster links with the wider community. It is an all Ireland programme.

From the Local Authority perspective it will comply with Action 150 to establish projects o engage with local communities and roll out and animate climate initiatives.

From the GAA Perspective green planning will benefit a clubs financial and operational sustainability as well as well being and sense of place.

Phase 1 was launched in December 2020 involving the thematic areas. 45 clubs carried out initial audits and are now consulting with expert groups, eg SEAI, Irish Water.

Phase 2 will bring in more clubs and Phase 3 will begin the scaling up – mid 2023

The pilot club in Kildare is Cappagh GAA.

The project team has also developed a module which will educate future Leaders and will collaborate with TY classes, the local community, Sustainable Energy Communities, Decarbonisation Zones, in an effort to ensure the sustainability of the Green Club Programme.

1. **Presentation from Ciara O’Flynn, Climate Action Graduate**

**on the Climate Innovation Fund**

The Fund initially began in 2021 and the first project was a hedgerow project in Celbridge which will begin to have an impact over the next couple of years.

In 2022 funding of €25,000 is now available to all Municipal Districts through an allocation of Local Property Taxes. The Fund’s aim is to foster innovative climate solutions in the county.

The application deadline will be the end of May. There are various eligibility and project criteria that must be met – eg registered with PPN, evidence of consents, budget, quality of Climate Adaption and Mitigation techniques. The application process is available on the KCC’s Consultation Portal.

1. **Update from Judith Brown of the Climate Actin Linkage Group**

Judith Brown sent her apologies. Item deferred to next meeting

1. **Any Other Business**

Cllr Bill Clear reminded the meeting that there would be an online Questions and Answers Workshop on the County Development Plan over the coming weeks.

Date of Next Meeting - 14th September 2022