



## KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

### CLIMATE ACTION

### STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE 07<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024

### 10AM NAAS LIBRARY

#### PRESENT

Councillors: Cllr. Bill Clear (Chair), Cllr. Peter Hamilton, Cllr. Fintan Brett, Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin Healy, Cllr. Naoise O’Cearthuil, Cllr. Rupert Heather, Cllr. Noel Connelly

Sectoral Interests: Tom Malone (Agricultural Representative), Nathan Flaherty (PPN), Louise Rawlins Traynor (PPN), Vivienne Kelly-Keane (PPN)

Officials: Marian Higgins, Director of Services  
Paula O’Rourke, Climate Action Office Coordinator  
Mary Morrissey, Climate Action Coordinator  
Paddy Lynch, Energy Efficiency Officer  
Victoria Kavanagh, Community Climate Action Officer  
Meabh Boylan, Biodiversity Officer

Speakers: Victoria Kavanagh, Meabh Boylan, Paddy Lynch, Mary Morrissey, Paula O’Rourke

Apologies: Sinead Rowan

#### **AGENDA ITEM 1: DECLARATIONS OF (A) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR (B) PECUNIARY OR BENEFICIAL INTERESTS UNDER SECTION 177 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED.**

No conflicts registered.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2: TO NOTE THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING OF 06<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023.**

Minutes of meeting of the 06<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were noted by all members present.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 3: TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

No matters arising.

**AGENDA ITEM 4: TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM MEABH BOYLAN (KCC BIODIVERSITY OFFICER) KCC BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE.**

Dr. Meabh Boylan gave a presentation titled 'KCC Biodiversity & Climate Change'.

**Members raised the following points and asked the following questions:**

- It can be a challenge to balance climate change and biodiversity as what might be positive for one might negatively impact the other.
- Discussion about planning issues, feasibility studies and tree planting.
- Comments on farming industry, EU directives, policy is changing, beef vs pork industry.
- Challenges of compromise, learning curve, education piece is so important.
- Recommendation of a book by Dr. Hannah Richie – Our World & Data. A solution focused perspective and discussion on working collaboratively.
- Is there any training on hedgerow and tree planting for community groups?
- Questions around ash die back and die back resistant ash.

**Replies to questions posed:**

- Training is planned for the planning department in KCC in 2024 to combat issues around biodiversity loss through tree and hedge eradication in new developments.
- There is training around tree planting and hedgerow restoration /planting called Hedge-lane training, should be happening this year.
- Currently, there are no native Irish Ash trees that are resistant to ash die back.

**AGENDA ITEM 5: TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM PADDY LYNCH (KCC ENERGY EFFICIENCY OFFICER) ON ONGOING AND FUTURE ENERGY PROJECTS INVOLVING KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL.**

Paddy Lynch gave an update on energy efficiency targets for the Council and the County.

**Members raised the following points and asked the following questions:**

- A district heating scheme would be an incredible development for Naas if possible.
- EV bike schemes are of particular interest.
- Question on PV panel installation on Cotton Mills building. Will that electricity be for council use only? Will excess go back to grid?
- Comment on energy cloud, direct emissions, leadership role important in County.
- How quickly will the fleet be replaced?
- How does the Council show it is decarbonized?

**Replies to questions posed:**

- KCC currently has 3 EV bikes for staff, the use of these is currently being assessed.
- There are national emissions targets to meet, penalties if not met.
- There will be no excess electricity fed back to the grid as the Áras is a huge energy consumer.
- Cannot give a timeline for full fleet to be decarbonised, change is happening slowly.
- Grass2Gas project – also business case made how many vehicles can run on biogas.

**AGENDA ITEM 6: TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM VICTORIA KAVANAGH (KCC COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION OFFICER) AN OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME FUND.**

Overview presentation of the Community Climate Action Programme Fund was given.

**Members raised the following points and asked the following questions:**

- Is the application timeline in this calendar year?
- How will a group define if they are applying for a small, medium or large grant.
- Are resident's associations eligible to apply?
- Comment on eligibility of groups and governance arrangements that need to be in place.
- Are all sports clubs eligible to apply?
- Does the grant cover costs such as insurance or what other grants cover costs such as insurance?
- Discussion on other available funding streams such as LEADER, community grants, Creative Ireland grants.
- CCAP is 100% funded.
- How will the grant be paid?
- Discussion on Uisce Eireann

**Replies to questions posed:**

- Grant deadline is 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and successful applicants will have 18 months to complete their projects, carrying over into 2025.
- The grant size groups apply for will be determined by quotes and total cost of project.
- The grant, like most, does not cover the cost of insurance unfortunately. This is an issue within the community sector for most grants.
- Resident's associations are eligible to apply once governance structure and financial governance are in place. Application success will also be dependent on the number of people that will benefit and geographical spread.
- All types of sports clubs are eligible to apply as long as they meet eligibility criteria. E.g. not-for-profit, governance structure and financial procedures are in place etc.
- Other grants and funding streams can be combined or leveraged against each other to complete different phases of projects.
- The grant will be recouped on vouched expenditure, prefunding element assessed on a case-by-case basis.

**AGENDA ITEM 7: TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM PAULA O'ROURKE (CLIMATE ACTION COORDINATOR) ON THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN AND CARO UPDATE.**

Climate Action Officer Mary Morrissey gave a brief overview of her role and responsibilities.

Paula O'Rourke gave an overview of CARO, Climate Action Office, SPC Work Plan, LACAP and DZ

**Members raised the following points and asked the following questions:**

- Discussion around bicycle library, asked for update.
- Discussion on climate anxiety, education and buy in is key to bringing community along.
- Question on green procurement, is the Climate Action Office finding conflict between procurement and green procurement guidelines?
- Comment on suppliers undertaking green procurement.
- Councillors thanked and acknowledged the Climate Action Office for their work and input on Climate Action Plan.

**Replies to questions posed:**

- Bicycle libraries are still being explored.
- Procurement and green procurement within that is a big area that is still being developed and there is a learning curve with it. Example of Kerdiffstown given for green procurement project.

**AGENDA ITEM 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was noted.

**AGENDA ITEM 8: TO NOTE DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in Council Chamber.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 12:10 p.m.