



# KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & WATER STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020  
@ 2:30PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS CHILL DARA**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: Suzanne Doyle (Chair), Íde Cussen, Anne Breen, Vanessa Liston, Brendan Wyse

Sectoral Interests: Evan Arkwright, Business/Commercial

Officials: Joe Boland, Director of Services  
Ken Kavanagh, Senior Executive Officer  
Brian O'Gorman, Administrative Officer, Environment  
Dara Wyer, Environment Awareness Officer  
Peter Mahoney, Supervising Community Warden, Environment  
Marie Phelan, Assistant Staff Officer, Environment  
Maeve Lonergan, Clerical Officer, Environment  
Geraldine Morris, Clerical Officer, Environment

Invited speakers: Paul Murphy, EM CARO, Kilkenny County Council  
Michael Holligan, Senior Engineer, Kildare County Council  
Edwina Moore, Executive Engineer, Kildare County Council

**APOLOGIES:** Emer Conway, PPN - Environmental/ Conservation  
Padraic O'Luanaigh, PPN - Community/Voluntary

Cllr Suzanne Doyle, Chair, welcomed all members. The decision to proceed in person was explained and advice given that future meetings during COVID Lockdown level 3 or above would be run by MS Teams.

**ITEM 1: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND WATER SERVICES STRATEGIC  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

Minutes were approved – proposed by Cllr Anne Breen and seconded by Cllr Vanessa Liston

**ITEM 2: TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

**ITEM 3: TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON EPA: WATER QUALITY IN IRELAND REPORT 2013-2018  
(MICHAEL HOLLIGAN, SENIOR ENGINEER)**

Presentation by Michael Holligan, S.E. Environment Section, on the EPA's "Water Quality in Ireland report 2013-2018". This report is available on the EPA website at:  
<http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/water/waterqua/waterqualityinireland2013-2018.html>

A short video was shown to the Committee detailing the health of our waters nationally. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y9hqG6tNiw> It was noted that only 53% of our surface water bodies nationally have satisfactory water quality.

Following this video, Mr Holligan continued the presentation with the focus on the quality of water in County Kildare and with specific examples of improvement works in the Lyreen sub-catchment.

In County Kildare there are no “High Status” i.e. pristine water bodies as well as “Bad Status” i.e. seriously polluted water bodies. Most water bodies fall within the “Good Status” and “Moderate Status”. The report shows that some of our waterbodies have deteriorated in status from Moderate to Poor and from Good to Moderate. Water quality data and maps are available on [www.catchments.ie](http://www.catchments.ie)

There are early indications that the actions being taken in the current River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 in the ‘Areas for Action’ i.e. Blackwater(Longwood), Clonshanbo/Lyreen, Morell, Portarlinton (this includes Monasterevin and surrounding areas), Athy Stream, Graney/Lerr, may be having a positive impact on water quality. Recent biological monitoring carried out by the EPA show improvements in a number of river water monitoring locations.

The significant pressures on our surface waters nationally include Agriculture, Hydromorphology, Urban Wastewater, Forestry, Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems.

The Council continues to implement its work programme for 2020 , e.g. monitoring water quality, carrying out detailed investigative assessments in a number of water bodies, reviewing effluent discharge licences, resolving pollution complaints and continuing DWWTS inspections. It is engaged with the EPA, LAWPRO and other public bodies to identify the actions required in the water bodies with less than Good Status.

All are encouraged to participate in the public consultation for the next River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027, see here <https://www.housing.gov.ie/water/water-quality/water-framework-directive/public-consultation-significant-water-management> .The presentation ended with a short video demonstrating ‘kick sampling’ of a small stream, prepared by LAWPRO.

A question and answer session ensued:

- A question was asked if KCC intends making a submission and whether the SPC members have sight of same. MH explained the process of public consultation and that KCC will be making a submission and in this context, there is a meeting on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October regarding the Boyne, Liffey and Barrow following which submission will be made available.
- BW – would it be possible to carry out a yearly rather than tri-yearly? – MH explained that EPA conduct biological studies on a 3-year cycle while some are annually if there is a good reason. Specific one-off assessments can also be carried out.
- SD enquired about the status of Municipal WWTPs and was advised that these are a contributing factor but have been the subject of remedial action over the years.

<b>Action: It was agreed that a copy of the KCC submission be circulated to SPC members</b>
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#### **ITEM 5: TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON ‘NATIVE WOODLANDS INITIATIVE’ (PAUL MURPHY, CARO)**

Cllr Doyle welcomed Paul Murphy, EMCARO. He explained the purpose of the ‘woodlands creation on Public Lands’ was to encourage public bodies to establish new native woodlands on suitable barren land. This was one of a suite of climate action initiatives as included in the new Programme for Government.

The aims and purpose of the scheme is to conserve nature by developing permanent and non-commercial woodlands on public land. For the years 2015-2019 there was less forestry planted and this has reinforced the need for new targets. Biodiversity and carbon sequestration is the ultimate aim. This initiative also accords with a number of actions as included in the Climate Adaptation Strategy. There is a minimum requirement of 0.1 hectare (though grouping can apply). The use of qualifying derelict sites has an incentive of €500/ha. Broadly, there are four elements as follows to be considered each of which yields a different grant rate.

Element	Funded activity	Grant rate
Element 1	Planting Scenarios 1-3	€6,220 / ha (payable in 2 instalments)
Element 2	Planting Scenarios 4-5	€5,880 / ha (payable in 2 instalments)
Element 3	Trails and Signage	Up to €3,800 / ha
Element 4	Forest Playground	Up to €10,000 per application

Note: Lands/Sites can be bundled to move to different elements.

Some local authorities already have candidate identified sites which have been assessed by Teagasc. More information can be found at:  
<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/grants-and-premium-schemes-2014-2020/>

SD thanked Paul for his overview.

A question was asked whether KCC has identified any land and was advised that Parks, Heritage and Planning departments were working on this as part of KCC Climate Adaptation Plan. Cherry Avenue was identified as another possible option. A discussion is to take place with housing and roads as these departments have identified land which might be available.

Concern was raised regarding the roadside verges, as well as possible overuse of laurel. It was suggested that the narrowness wasn't an issue but would need to be discussed with the Roads Dept

JB stated that the Council would welcome the suggestion of further candidate sites.

A question was asked whether any engagement had been made with stud farms for example, around Kildangan – Paul Murphy advised that the landowner must apply.

**ACTION: It was agreed that the members of the SPC would be kept informed and that some initial pilot projects relating to County Kildare would be progressed.**

#### **ITEM 4: TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DRAFT LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN (KEN KAVANAGH, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER)**

The Council had received 32 submissions following public consultation and draft revisions were made to the plan as a result. Pdraig O'Luanaigh PPN forwarded a number of observations which were distributed to all.

The topics arising from the public consultation process included: public awareness of litter, litter statistics and data, graffiti, waste minimisation initiatives, business/retailers responsibilities, role of community wardens, street cleaning, recycling facilities, community involvement, increase in litter fines, liaison with Tidy Towns, provision of street bins etc.

The members asked for a summary of the submissions made and where they were references in the revised plan. This was agreed and would be discussed at the next meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

KK assured the meeting that references have been put in the chapters and nothing has been missed.

KK mentioned that as the current plan was out of date, there really was a need to resolve outstanding matters and to forward the draft plan to full council for adaptation at each stage.

Some of the issues raised in the submissions were beyond the scope of the litter plan – e.g., reduction in commercial rates.

There was also a contribution from the supervising warden who cited a number of successful enforcement actions. There was a general consensus that enforcement actions needed to be strengthened.

The Chair noted that despite requests there was no representative from the Roads Dept present. She felt that it was important that this Department be part of the deliberations. Accordingly, it was agreed as an action that a sub-group of the SPC – Cllrs Vanessa Liston, Ide Cussen and Suzanne Doyle – would meet in the coming week with a representative from the Roads Dept with a view to coming back to members at the next SPC meeting.

**ITEM 6: TO NOTE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER AT 2.30PM – COUNCIL CHAMBER**

It was further noted that policies relating to public outdoor markets would also feature on the agenda for the next week.

Dependent on COVID restrictions – if level 3 or above it will be by MS Teams otherwise in the Chamber.

The Chair thanked all for input and the meeting then concluded.