



## KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

### ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & WATER STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

#### MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021 @ 2:30PM BY MS TEAMS

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** Suzanne Doyle (Chair), Ide Cussen, Brian Dooley, Anne Breen, Vanessa Liston, Brendan Wyse

**Sectoral Interests:** Evan Arkwright, Business/Commercial  
Padraic O’Luanaigh, PPN - Community/Voluntary  
Emer Conway, PPN - Environmental/ Conservation

**Presenter:** Nuala Madigan, Chief Executive, Irish Peatlands Conservation Council

**Officials:** Joe Boland, Director of Services  
Ken Kavanagh, Senior Executive Officer  
Aoife O’Malley, Administrative Officer, Environment  
Dara Wyer, Environment Awareness Officer  
Brigid Loughlin, Biodiversity Officer  
Peter Mahoney, Community Warden Supervisor  
Marie Phelan, Assistant Staff Officer, Environment  
Geraldine Morris, Clerical Officer,

Cllr Suzanne Doyle, Chair, welcomed all members of the SPC.

**1. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND WATER SERVICES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

Minutes were approved – proposed by Ide Cussen and seconded by Vanessa Liston

**2. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Note was made of the 15 Electric charging points in Kerdiffstown and concern re byelaws, however this was a condition of the planning, an issue of methodology and different from normal across the county. It was committed as part of the project management.

**3. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON COMMUNITY COMPOSTING FROM NUALA MADIGAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER IRISH PEATLANDS CONSERVATION COUNCIL AND DARA WYER, ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS OFFICER, KCC**

Following a warm welcome from the Chair Nuala introduced herself and advised all that she was appointed Chief Executive Officer since January 2021, having worked for the last 14 years in the Peatland environment. She is a Kildare woman at heart! She spoke at length regarding the work

of the Irish Peatlands Conservation Council (IPCC). She spoke about Lodge Bog and that the alternate to peat, given that Bord Na Mona are ceasing manufacture of same is composting and this will be of good benefit to the amateur gardener to get them away from peat use in flower beds etc. She showed some pictures of different types of composting sites, of note one was rather large and did not lend itself to ease of access for removing composted material. It takes minimum 1 year for items to compost. Items suitable for composting is garden waste e.g., branches, grass cuttings (no food), anything from a plant – a nutrient rich mix. Once the items put in they are covered in plastic and left to do its job, there is little maintenance. The IPCC have determined that smaller 1 pallet square is the best size to use as they are easy to access, and you can have a series of them. Consideration also needs to be given to keep them close to wherever the composting will be used. Communities e.g., FAS workers could create one in a village for their own use. There is one successful in Kildare in Drehid Community.

A question and answer session ensued. Concern was noted as to how we will manage without the manufacturing of peat. It was suggested to use the volunteers of the Men's Sheds Association to make up the boxes. Nuala advised she was happy to attend biodiversity groups to give talks. There is no composting policy within Kildare County Council but initiatives ongoing. (Dara to speak about these next). Suggestion was made to include a submission on composting in the County Development Plan. Concern was raised regarding keeping rodents away, and ensuring that the correct items went into it especially if placed on a housing estate and the need to mitigate this. In reply Nuala advised that it wasn't suggested for housing estate but the wider community eg tidy towns; household rubbish is to be managed in the home by use of brown bin. Concern was raised that the work might fall to the same few people; would there be a small from it (no, unless food put in). Grants might be available under Community Foundation, 35k was obtained for Lodge Bog boardwalk. Question was asked as to how to get businesses involved on a social corporate front. It was suggested perhaps to get the likes of Johnston Garden Centre to have a composting unit on site. Going forward a policy is needed, as well as quantifying how much ground is needed as well as commitment.

Presentation by Dara Wyer, Environmental Awareness Officer to reinforce the Green Waste aspects: Green waste refers to waste from plants, shrubs and trees. It does not refer to food waste of any type. Green waste material changes over the season (pruning in spring, grass clippings throughout the summer, leaves in autumn). As these types of waste are different, the method of dealing with it also differs. There are 2 types of waste creation – that in the home (domestic environment – leaves, weeds, grass and light hedge cuttings) and community (grass, hedging, large branches etc). In both scenarios, the first step is to look at minimising or reducing the waste at source, before disposal options are considered - Compost green waste at home – composters readily available from €30- even possible to make them; green waste can be mixed

with some paper and cardboard; if your garden is big enough to produce green waste, it is big enough to fit a composter! Food waste and excess green waste can be placed in the brown bin. All customers in a town or village of 500 people or more are entitled to a brown bin. There is a charge- but as contractors must pay for the Landfill Levy on all waste going into the black bin, this waste is charged for anyway. Waste is turned to compost.

In the community: Residents Association should request MD office to remove leaves fallen on roads, ideally in early autumn. This is done to stop gullies from getting blocked, so leaves should not be bagged ([roads@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:roads@kildarecoco.ie)). Trees on common areas should not be pruned or cut by Residents Association. Parks department schedule qualified tree surgeons to do maintenance, reduction or removal of trees ([parks@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:parks@kildarecoco.ie)). Grass: Mulching mowers cut grass more finely- smaller clippings can be left as they quickly break down. But cutting may need to be done more often as grass needs to be kept short. All resident's associations should be considering leaving sections of grass uncut for wildlife- this will need to be cut back at the end of the summer.

Community Green Waste: "Informal" Green Waste Composting - one of the Silleachain Lane sites; 75 tonnes of green waste removed; 20 tonnes of landfill waste; cost of removal plus fencing ca. €11,000

Community Green Waste Collections: **Grab Hire option** - Needs to be policed- who turns away unsuitable waste? Green waste composting facilities need to know what they are receiving - no plastic bags or invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed; Costs can be prohibitive; Once collection is commenced the expectation is it will be repeated and extended to other areas. **Commercial shredder option** - Deals with large woody green waste; Costs are also prohibitive; Shredded material can be used as mulch.

**Composting** – a picture of a bin was shown which was a scaled up version of home composter; Can be made from old pallets; KCC will support community groups undertaking this, with advice, supply of timber, paint and signage. **Leaf Mould Composting** – made out of chicken wire and a pallet - Very simple and cost effective; Compost is very good quality.

In conclusion, it is the Environment Awareness Officers intention to include provision in next County Development Plan that proposals for new housing developments include sites for green waste composting/community garden space rather than looking for suitable sites afterwards. Focus on dealing with green waste at source for domestic and community. Communications and awareness need to be increased. Greater understanding that dumping of green waste is no different from dumping of any other waste- this requires enforcement.

A question and answer session ensued:

As Resident Associations are reluctant to have leaf collection point, the other option would be a hessian bag or give them compostable bags and get the council to collect and give credits back to the Ras. It was noted there was no where in Celbridge to shred Christmas Trees, however once the new Civic Amenity Centre is built there this will help. Reiteration of earlier comment of getting garden centres to provide a service to customers where they take in garden waste and have a composting pit on site. Concern was raised if the AES lorry which collects the blue and brown bin on the same day, do they put the brown off for composting or does it all go in the one heap. There is a composting area to be viewed in Riverside.

**3A. TO CONSIDER NOTICE OF MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR CALDWELL: CL23/0720: PROVISION OF GREEN WASTE COMPOSTING AREA ALONG THE SILLEACHAIN LANE: THE MOTION THAT THE COUNCIL PROVIDE GREEN WASTE COMPOSTING AREAS IN CELBRIDGE AND LEIXLIP, INCLUDING MOBILE FACILITIES TO BE CONSIDERED, BE REFERRED TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AND WATER STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE (SPC).**

**KEN – WILL YOU WRITE THIS UP PLEASE**

**Action: Discuss with Communications officer**

**4. TO RECEIVE PRESENTATION ON BIODIVERSITY IN A COMMUNITY/TIDY TOWNS CONTEXT FROM BRIDGET LOUGHLIN, HERITAGE OFFICER, KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Presentation given by Bridget Loughlin, Heritage Officer, on Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan Project 2020 with an overview of the **Biodiversity Crisis** where 31,000 species occur in Ireland, but Conservation status of 10% so far assessed; a fifth of species and a third of bee species are threatened with extinction. Conservation status of 1/3 of our habitats protected EU Habitats Directive dis-improved (2007 – 2013); 37 species of bird are of high conservation concern; Atlantic salmon, European eel and angel shark catastrophic population declines; Curlews are down from 200,00 pairs in the 1990's to 200 pairs now; the freshwater pearl mussel is facing extinction; huge reduction in the biomass of insect life; loss of habitats primary reason. **County Kildare Heritage Plan 2019-2025**

- Action 8: Support national initiatives such as the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and the National Biodiversity Plan
- Action 14: Support the promotion of and involvement in Citizen Science which encourages the recording of wildlife and biodiversity for submission to the National Biodiversity Centre.
- Action 15: Support the preparation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans
- Action 65: Carry out habitat mapping to assist in the identification of Local Biodiversity

Important Sites and integrate findings into the County Development Plan and local area plans

### **Kildare County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024**

- Action 15: To support bio-diversity through natural pollination

The Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan Project 2020 programme includes:

- Biodiversity Training
- Mapping of the town/village
- Identifying what is good- habitats/practices
- Discussion on potential projects
- Sign up to projects
- Development of plans

A number of zoom meeting have been held and some of the above actions completed but 2020 wasn't the best year to start this on! A monthly bulletin is issued.

Grants have been obtained for 10 Biodiversity Projects for Winter 2020 and Spring 2021

Next steps include creating a Biodiversity Action Plan Network, creating a Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan 2021; obtaining funding from Community Heritage Grant Scheme

A question and answer session ensued: where in Bridget was thanked for her vibrant presentation which included a lot of learning; Need to source 2022 funding for Tidy Towns. It was hoped to use the Tidy Town network as a basis but not exclusively but need to ensure people who don't wish to get involved in Tidy Towns have opportunity to get involved in this project. Pollinator Plan to be discussed at February Full Council Meeting and CE and Mayor will sign off on it. Aim to update the Biodiversity plan in 2022. Concern raised re care of hedgehogs.

**Action: A framework of words to be included in County Development Plan.**

### **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Discussion took place around the Litter Management Plan and a request for a sentence to be amended/changed to include 'per capita'. Concern was raised that this was already covered in the 4 bullet points and there would be logistical issue between MDs on this point as it would mean a decrease for some MDs and this would not go down well. It would mean each Elected Member gets €55,000. It was suggested that a statement is sent out and representations were sent back to meeting administrator.

2. Concern raised re drugs littering – **Action: Ask Chris Pender to attend next SPC; Check with Roads if they have a protocol on drugs**

**6. TO NOTE DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021 AT 2.30PM, VENUE TBC**

**NOTED**