



KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & WATER STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING 12TH MAY 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'Lunaigh, PPN - Community/Voluntary
Emer Conway, PPN - Environmental/ Conservation
Thomas O'Connor, Agriculture

Officials: Joe Boland, Director of Services
Ken Kavanagh, Senior Executive Officer, Environment
Christine O'Grady, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate
Anthony Shanahan, Administrative Officer, Corporate
Aoife O'Malley, Administrative Officer, Environment
Colm Flynn, A/Senior Engineer, Environment
Dara Wyer, Environment Awareness Officer
Paula O'Rourke, Climate Action Officer
Geraldine Morris, Clerical Officer

Cllr Suzanne Doyle, Chair, welcomed the attendance of Thomas O'Connor nominated by the agriculture pillar.

1. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND WATER SERVICES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10TH FEBRUARY 2020

Minutes proposed by Cllr Anne Breen and seconded by Cllr Brendan Wyse and approved

2. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chair noted that a number of matters which were issues nationally relating to chinese lanterns, dogs etc had been referred to the SPC. In her view, as these were essentially national issues, it would best to write to the relevant government departments setting out the concerns of the council in order that these might be more fully investigated and assessed at a national level. This approach was agreed.

3. TO CONSIDER DRAFT POLICY REGARDING CASUAL TRADING SELECTION CRITERIA

A presentation by given by Anthony Shanahan, Administrative Officer which encompassed the following main aspects:

- Legislative context
- Existing Bye-Laws
- Approved Locations
- Historical Markets Rights

- Statutory process-review/making a bye law
- Powers of elected members
- Exemptions
- Current position – Summary
- Role for SPC - Casual Trading Selection Policy
- Submissions on Policy and related responses
- Elements of Policy

In brief terms, the intention was to apprise the SPC of the new legislative/procedural requirements and to seek the view of its members with a view to progressing to the next stage which involves:

- Consideration of Policy by Corporate Policy Group
- Consulting with the Municipal Districts and
- Preparing draft bye-laws

The presentation was commended, and a discussion ensued which focused on the following:

- Linkage with policy aspects
- Importance of good management of public markets to include sustainability, waste, and other environmental aspects
- Legal requirements including licensing
- Enforcing standards and the resources needed to achieve good standards
- Encouraging opportunity
- Compliance with planning considerations
- Relationship with existing traders
- Criteria for designating areas/locations
- Encouraging start-up activity and local produce
- Coordination with public realm aspects as well as existing Section 254 licenses

Reference was made to Athy market which was generating significant footfall. Questions were dealt with by Mr Shanahan who also invited the members to view the published Departmental Guidance in this area (links provided in first slide of presentation to SPC).

In considering the matter, the members stressed the importance of ensuring the highest standards, the need for active enforcement/management and in particular, coordinating with public realm initiatives.

Members also queried the extent to which impacts on ratepayers can be a consideration in the determination of licence applications. It was confirmed by Mr Shanahan that the regulation, legal advice and Government guidance in this matter are consistent and they do not permit this as a consideration when assessing an application, presumably because of the origin of the regulation in EU Competition Directives.

In this context, the Chair confirmed that there would be a presentation at the next meeting from the Public Realm team regarding standards of good practice (nationally and internationally) in relation to public markets.

Action: On the proposal of Cllr Cussen, seconded by Cllr Liston it was unanimously agreed that the suggested approach, as set out by Mr Shanahan, be approved in order that the matter can proceed to the next stage, which is consideration of the Policy by the Corporate Policy Group.

4. TO RECEIVE PRESENTATION REGARDING A PROPOSAL TO CREATE A NATIONAL PEATLANDS PARK IN COUNTY KILDARE

A detailed presentation was led by Lorraine Benson, Jesmond Harding, Ray Stapleton and Tristram Whyte all from the National Peatlands Park Group. The purpose was to set out the merits of designating the Bog of Allen area as a National Peatlands Park. This would have, inter alia, the following expected benefits:

- Education, scientific, archeological etc
- A new relationship with peatland heritage
- A change in perceptions and empowering of local communities
- Forming part of a network of similar sites both nationally and internationally

The presentation included conceptual maps, detailed overview of flora and fauna aspects as well as linkages to existing attractions. There would also be significant benefits to the local economy particularly from a tourism perspective.

The main purpose of the presentation was to garner support from the Council (and other stakeholders) particularly for the purpose of including it as an objective as part of the review of the County Development Plan.

The presentation was commended by the members who warmly endorsed the trust of the proposal. A general discussion took place. Cllr Wyse referred to the importance of linking the initiative with the national planning framework and of the importance of “re-wilding” the existing landscape.

Ms Benson agreed that the intention was to create a significant vista of wilderness on a grand scale. In her view, the support of the members, particularly in the context of the review of the forthcoming county development plan would be particularly important.

Cllr Liston highlighted the importance of a national approach and suggested that the group communicate with relevant Ministers, particularly in the context of the next round of mid-term reviews.

The Director of Services also commended the presentation and suggested there were also possible synergies with the Just Transition initiative. It would, however, be important in his view that there would be good engagement with the landowner i.e. Bord na Mona. The chair referred to the importance of also getting the other SPCs on board. Mr Dara Wyer, Environment Awareness Officer, suggested that the proposal blended well with the national climate action plan. A further brief discussion took place regarding its tourism potential.

Action: The proposal was commended and endorsed by the SPC.

5. NOTICE OF QUESTION FROM EMER CONWAY, PPN REPRESENTATIVE: THE CLIMATE ACTION LINKAGE GROUP WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF KCC ACTIVELY MONITORS AND ACTIONS REPORTED SEWAGE OUTFALLS

The meeting was addressed by Mr Colm Flynn, Acting Senior Engineer, who set out in detail the procedure in relating to the monitoring of waste water discharges to rivers and streams. He also referred to ongoing liaison with the relevant stakeholders including: LAWPRO, Farming community, Irish Water etc. He also gave a brief overview of the fieldwork involved and also to the main categories of concern. He also stressed that there was very good data available in relation to river water quality.

A general discussion ensued wherein some of the members referred to particular areas of sensitivity. Cllr Liston sought further information regarding governance aspects.

In response to queries, Mr Flynn advised as follows:

- there were no designated bathing areas in Co Kildare
- arising from the monitoring, there was extensive data available
- he agreed that there were particular areas of concern wherein funding was sought for the upgrade of wastewater treatment plans
- there was also a drinking water protection plan in place

It was also requested Irish Water would give a presentation in due course in relation to drinking water standards.

Mr Flynn's response was considered to be comprehensive and was noted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A brief discussion took place wherein the Director of Services advised that proposals were in train to augment current litter/street sweeping arrangements for the forthcoming summery period. These would be communicated in advance of the next meeting of full council.

There being no other business, the meeting then concluded at 4.51pm

7. TO NOTE DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 8TH SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 2.30PM, VENUE/MODE TBC

NOTED