

**Minutes of Meeting of the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee held on
Wednesday 9th June, 2021 at 2:30 pm in the Boardroom and via Teams,
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

SPC Members

Cllr. J. Crowe, Chair
Cllr. P. O’Gorman
Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cllr. J. Cooney
Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Cllr. I. Lynch
Mr. D. M. Wise

Staff of Clare County Council

Ms. C. Kirby, Director of Physical Development
Ms. L. O’Neill, SEO Ennis MD
Mr. J Gannon, A/SE, Transportation
Mr. A Kelly, Chief Fire Officer
Mr. C Feeney, SE, Environment
Mr. L O’Connor, AO, Transportation
Ms. Angela O’Connor, ASO

Apologies : Mr P. Hayes, Mr. S Lenihan

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the SPC Meeting of 24th February, 2021

The Minutes were proposed by Cllr. Joe Cooney and seconded by Damien Mathew Wise

There were no matters arising.

Item 2- Briefing by Carmel Kirby, DOS on the draft Beach Bye Laws 2021.

C Kirby gave a briefing to the members of the SPC on the draft beach bye laws 2021. The draft bye laws include a provision which will prohibit the use of inflatable toys on Clare beaches. Following information received from Water Safety Ireland and Waterways Ireland and submissions received through the public consultation process personal watercraft will be allowed to launch at Spanish Point, White Strand Travaun (Milltown), White Strand Killard (Doonbeg), Ballycuggeran and Ballyalla Lake.

D M Wise asked that consideration be given to people with disabilities that require the use of floatation aids.

C Kirby confirmed that the ban is on inflatable toys, but that Damon had made a very good point. C Kirby confirmed that “floatation aids” would not be prohibited and this will be taken into account in the draft beach bye laws 2021.

Item 3- National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy

C Feeney gave a very detailed and comprehensive presentation on this plan.

Cyril spoke about how in a circular economy, waste and resource use are minimised; the value of products and materials is maintained for as long as possible through good design, durability and repair; and when a product has reached the end of its life, its parts are used again and again to create further useful products.

It is an alternative to the traditional, linear economy, in which we extract great quantities of natural resources to make things that we may use once only before throwing them away.

At its best, living in a circular economy allows us more access to things which are well-designed and can be shared, reused, repaired and remade; and when we keep manufacture and remanufacture as local as possible, we provide local jobs and services with the lightest impact possible on the quality of our water, air, soil and health. In recent times we have seen the value of shorter and more localised supply chains providing for our needs as the fragility of global supply chains has been exposed.

D M Wise spoke about the long standing problem in relation to contaminated waste being shipped out of Ireland to foreign counties. If as much as possible was done at a local level to recycle there would be less cross contamination. He asked that the issue of waivers for people on disability be looked at. Both Dublin and Limerick have a waiver scheme in place.

D M Wise also spoke about Community Composting Services and the need to look at aerobic digestion in order to minimise the amount of waste and contamination.

Cllr C Colleran Molly thanked Cyril for his presentation and asked what is the ultimate goal and how do the 3 different regions that have been set up collaborate?

C Feeney responded to D Wise saying that all producers of waste will be looked at in the overall strategy. The education process will also be looked at together with the implementation side in order to achieve the ambitions of the Minister.

C Feeney confirmed that Clare County Council do not operate a waiver scheme as the refuse service is delivered by private sector.

C Feeney also outlined that Clare County Council have looked at aerobic composting and are always looking at new initiatives to provide support to communities where possible. Clare County Council have a composting system in place in Ballyduffbeg Landfill in Inagh.

In response to Cllr Colleran Molloy's queries, **C Feeney** noted that there would be an all of Ireland approach adopted and that implementation actions would be agreed at national level to meet targets.

Cllr C Colleran Molly asked how far Ireland lagged behind in terms of recycling.

C Feeney confirmed that the current recycling rate is approximately 40% -41%. In terms of Municipal Waste generated per person, Ireland is at 550kg per person while the average rate in the EU is 474kg.

Item 4- Presentation of Photovoltaic Project for Aras Contae an Chláir by Cyril Feeney

C Feeney gave a brief outline of a proposal for the provision of solar power for Aras Contae an Chláir which potentially would generate enough renewable energy to supply the building .He noted that Clare County Council needs to lead by example and there is a requirement to think big in order to meet 2030 targets. Energy efficiency continues to be a national imperative with a crucial role to play in Ireland meeting its national and international energy and climate goals and objectives. In 2009, the Government set an ambitious energy efficiency target of 33% by 2020 for the sector. The Climate Actions Plan 2019 and the Programme for Government 2020 outlines even greater ambition for the public sector by setting a more ambitious 50% energy efficiency target, introducing a new 50% emissions reduction target by 2030 and for the sector of lead on decarbonisation across Ireland and tackling climate change.

In 2020, Clare County Council's energy bill was €2,555,000 using 19,500,000 kWh, with the Áras Contae an Chláir using 8% of this. The potential use of solar power at Ennis Leisure Centre is also to be considered.

D M Wise commented on the fact that it is a pity that surplus electricity cannot be sold to the network.

C Feeney said that a micro generators bill is coming down the line with plans afoot at national level to future proof surplus energy which may bring the option of selling to the grid.

D M Wise also noted the need for more electric charging points for people with disability and that the use of electric cars needs to be prioritised.

Cllr C Colleran Molloy thanked Cyril for his presentation and asked if the project is to proceed what would the estimated cost be, what is the time frame and has any other Local Authority done a similar project?

C Feeney responded by saying that to deliver this project could cost between €100-€150k and that finance options would have to be considered. A consultant for the project is being procured and that by the end of the year of early next year the appropriate assessment and Part 8 process would be completed, subject to funding. Wicklow County Council are proceeding with a bigger project, they may have potential to export to the grid. The project is ready to go to consultant stage and there will be learnings from the project in Wicklow.

Cllr Ian Lynch asked if decreasing energy costs is the main driver of this project or was it the reduction in the use of fossil fuels

C Feeney said that if Clare County Council can reduce energy costs, savings can be allocated to other projects but the main focus is to reduce our carbon emissions and be more efficient.

AOB:

Cllr Joe Cooney asked if Clare County Council could look at upgrading road markings throughout the County.

D M Wise mentioned that accessible toilets need to be looked at. He noted that he has given submissions to the PPN in relation to universal access design documents.

C Kirby confirmed that there are new accessible toilets at Ballyalla. Damon's comments are to be outlined to the Council's Access Officer.

Date of next meeting : 7th September, 2021

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Cllr. John Crowe

Chairperson

Signed: _____

Liam O'Connor

Administrative Officer

Date: _____