

**Minutes of Meeting of the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee held on
Tuesday 15th February, 2022 at 3:30 pm in the Boardroom,
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare and via MS Teams.**

Present:

SPC Members

Cllr. J. Crowe, Chair
Cllr. P. O’Gorman
Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cllr. I. Lynch
Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Cllr L Grant
Mr. D. M. Wise
Ms. A. Wheeler
Ms. T. O’Donohoe

Staff of Clare County Council

Ms. C. Kirby, Director of Physical Development
Mr. A Kelly, Chief Fire Officer
Mr. J Leahy, SE, Transportation
Mr. S Lenihan, SE, PMO
Mr. C Feeney, SE, Environment
Mr. L O’Connor, AO, Transportation
Mr. B Flynn, SEE, Environment
Ms. L O’Neill, SEO, Ennis MD
Ms. A O’Sullivan, SEE, Transportation
Mr. T Burke, SACFO, Fire Service
Mr. M O’Brien, ACFO, Fire
Mr. K Greene, ACFO, Fire
Mr. J Fearon, Graduate, Environment
Ms. A O’Connor, ASO

Apologies : Mr P Hayes

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the SPC Meeting of 14th November, 2021.

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

Item 2- Matters Arising - Nil

Item 3 – Review of Fire & Emergency Operations Plan by Adrian Kelly, Chief Fire Officer

At the November 2021 SPC meeting it was agreed that objectives of the current Fire and Emergency Operations Plan would be reviewed and indications provided of changes, if any, that took place at a national level since the adoption of the current plan. A copy of this review was sent to the members in advance of the meeting.

Adrian outlined that the objectives have been achieved and exceeded in many instances. Clare County Council have continued to provide resources to its Fire Service in order that the service to the public is maintained to the highest standards, and the personnel that work within the

Fire Service are provided with equipment, training and facilities that enable them to work in a safe manner.

At the end of the review of the objectives, there are items listed for consideration when drafting the 2022 Plan which should be available for discussion at the May SPC meeting.

Carmel Kirby informed members that this is a corporate document. The objectives outlined in the last draft will be implemented and 13 items will be examined in the context of the new draft plan to be developed by the Fire Service when everyone is in agreement to the approach.

Cllr Liam Grant thanked Adrian for his review and said that the equipment and training in Clare Fire and Rescue Service is second to none in the country. He asked about the turnover and retention of staff and reaching the approved number of 15 for Shannon Fire Station and also the numbers for Scariff Fire Station.

In response Adrian stated the Fire Service has been working with Shannon Chamber and various companies in the area to encourage people to join the service. Currently there are 9 employed but the objective is to achieve 15 and agreed to talk to Cllr Liam Grant off line in relation to this matter.

Adrian confirmed that the Fire Service are currently recruiting and he shared a 30 second recruitment video clip with the members. The recruitment issues that Clare Fire and Rescue Service are experiencing are not just in Ireland, but it's a European issue with volunteerism in general.

Cllr Ian Lynch asked Adrian if he had any update on the First Responders – American Model. Adrian responded by saying that this is being dealt with at a national level, with the CCMA and other departments but there is no conclusion as of yet

Item No 4 - Electric Vehicle Briefing – Presentation given by Anne O'Sullivan, Senior Executive Engineer, Transportation

John Leahy introduced Anne O'Sullivan, Senior Executive Engineer, Transportation Department to the members. John outlined technical and financial support for EV Charging points that will be required for 3 to 5 years. A National Strategy will be developed and published later in 2022. Clare County Council will also be developing their own Local Authority Electric Vehicle Strategy.

Anne O Sullivan gave a comprehensive presentation on Electric Vehicle Charging Points and transition to Light Electric Vehicles.

Damon Wise asked that the Local Authority include facilities for charging of electric wheel chairs as they only have a few kms range which causes difficulties for use on cycle paths.

Cllr Ian Lynch expressed his delight about the electrification of the fleet. He welcomed the 4 new charging points in Loophead. However, he asked if the Council would look into putting charging points in Kilrush as the infrastructure exists already?

Cllr Liam Grant asked how long will the grant be available and if it has been availed of?

Anne responded by confirming that the cost of each charger is €35K, and a grant of €5k is available since 2020 with a number of terms and conditions. Anne committed to considering the wheelchair charging points.

Cllr Ian Lynch requested that ducting for EV charging points would be installed when footpaths works are being completed under Active Travel funding.

John Leahy thanked Anne for her presentation and informed the members that all comments will be considered.

Item 5 – Biodiversity Manual – Presentation by Congella Maguire, Heritage Officer

Congella gave a presentation on a new Biodiversity Manual prepared by Clare County Council and a brief outline of the 5 sections contained in the manual. She confirmed that this is a live document designed to be updated on a regular basis and each section can be looked at separately. Toolbox training will be rolled out to staff on the use of the manual.

Carmel thanked Congella on her presentation and also congratulated her on Minister Eamon Ryan launching the manual.

Item 6 – Rights of Nature and opportunities for Councils in Ireland – presentation by Aisling Wheeler

Aisling gave an introduction to the Rights of Nature and opportunities for Councils in Ireland. She said nature is a living ecosystem, all species, including humankind depend on and have a right to flourish, evolve, generate and be protected. She informed the members that Derry City and Strabane District Council was the first Council to pass a Rights of Nature motion in June 2021.

Carmel Kirby asked if Aisling was bringing this to other SPC's and is it aligned with the European Sustainability Development Goals?

Aisling responded by confirming that she intends to bring this to other SPC's and that the European SDG's adopted parts of the Rights of Nature.

Congella Maguire complimented Aisling on a very interesting presentation and said that it would be interesting to see how it would fit into the Council's various plans and strategies.

Item 6. AOB- Damon informed the members that the Clare PPN had received an email from Changing Places Ireland stating that ‘The Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, Peter Burke, TD, invites submissions, observations and comments on a proposed amendment to the Building Regulations Part M (Access and Use) to make provision for a changing places toilet in certain buildings.’

Damon asked if Clare County Council would look into this.

C Kirby agreed to this request and confirmed that email will be distributed and shared with the SPC members.

Carmel and John Crowe thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting.

Agree dates for next meetings:-

- **Tuesday 31st May, 2022**
- **Tuesday 6th September, 2022**
- **Tuesday 15th November, 2022**

Item 7 - Date of next meeting : Tuesday May 31st. 2022

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Cllr. John Crowe

Chairperson

Signed: _____

Liam O’Connor

Administrative Officer

Date: _____