

MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27th February 2019.

1. Minutes of the meeting held 28th November 2018

Order: Agreed

2. Matters arising

- (i) Waste Categorisation report – EPA

- The Waste categorisation report that issued shows a significant increase in the plastic fraction of the municipal waste. (JMcC)
- The EIS for the DWtE facility claims it would be beneficial for Greenhouse Gas Emissions in fact it is detrimental (JMcC)
- The plant is not a renewable generator of electricity; it is causing significant greenhouse gas emissions (JMcC)
- Owing to the increase in the plastic element of waste, the waste has a significantly higher calorific value (JMcC)

Order: Noted. Mr McCarthy to present on this matter at the next meeting of the SPC.

- (ii) Software queries – DWtE
 - (iii) Emergency Service – June 2017 incident at the DWtE facility
 - (iv) Queries on AWN reports to the EPA.

Members raised the following in under Matter Arising.

- Is there any update on the placing of nets (to gather plastic and other debris) on the Drainage overflows. (COM)
- Is there any further update on the control of dogs and the introduction of hares on Bull Island (COM)
- When will the Tolka be cleaned (COM)
- Will the ban on single use plastics be in force at the Kodaline concert in Saint Anne's Park and what acoustic management will be place at the event. (COM)
- What will happen to the motion that was agreed on the use of glyphosate (RM)

Celine Reilly responded

- Updates will issue in relation to the Tolka and drain overflows.
- A report will issue in relation to the Kodaline concert in relation to noise and single use plastics.

Order: The Chair wrote to Covanta in relation to items (ii) – (iii) and a response is yet to be received.

It was agreed that the PPN motion on Glyphosate usage be sent to City Council for consideration.

3. Correspondence –

- (i) EPA response to invitation
- (ii) Correspondence from Joe McCarthy

Order: Correspondence Noted

4. Chairperson's Business

The Chair requested that the Emergency Motion in the name of Councillor Mannix Flynn below is taken under Chairperson's business.

"This meeting of Dublin city council environment strategic policy committee calls on Irish water to address the ongoing issues to public health and safety as a result of the recent spillage of sewage at the waste water treatment plant at Ringsend. Further that Irish water attend this committee and give account of their operations Failures at their waste water Treatment plant at Ringend."

Members raised the following in relation to the motion that was tabled

- It is unacceptable that Irish Water did not attend this meeting and they should present at the March meeting of the City Council (MF)
- It is disgraceful that the public was not notified of the spillage in a timely manner (MF)
- The discharge should not have happened and there should be a plan in place to deal with such events (MF)
- Why was there a delay in informing the general public of the spillage (CC)
- It took 2 days from when the spillage occurred for the public to be notified (CC)
- Irish Water should clarify what pathogens were in the sludge (CC)
- When was the City Council informed to the spillage (CC)
- A range of water sports were on going while the spillage occurred (COM)
- It is disgraceful that the public was not notified (COM)
- A report is required to identify who is responsible for what function; Irish Water, Dublin City Council & Anglian Water (Mary F)
- People use the bay all year round, it is dangerous (CB)
- Irish Water must explain why there was a delay in notifying the public of the spillage and should attend the March City Council meeting (CB)
- The new wastewater treatment plant at Clonshaugh is unresolved, confidence in Irish Water will be undermined as result of the non-disclosure of the spillage (MOB)
- It is not good enough that the public was not informed and in the manner how the spillage was explained (MM)
- There is a lot of public material in relation to the discharge licence available at the EPA offices (JMcC)
- The problem was with the batch reactor (JMcC)
- Solids are still visible 2 days later (JMcC)

- The wastewater treatment plant is overburdened (JMcC)
- The change in the processing technique in the plant is the cause of the problem (JMcC)
- The batch reactor in question had broken elements which caused the overflow without Irish Water's knowledge it would seem.(JMcC)
- It would seem that the upgrade of the plant is failing at its first test (JMcC)
- Irish Water should be here to explain what happened, how it happened and what will be done to prevent recurrence (JMcC)
- There is a public health issue (RK)

Celine Reilly responded

- DCC became aware of the Spillage on Monday (25th February)
- DCC is extremely concerned about the spillage
- An invitation will be extended again to Irish Water to present on the spillage
- The regulator for this incident is the EPA
- A report (from Irish Water) should issue very soon on the incident

Order: Motion Carried. Refer to the Chief Executive's Department for inclusion on the March Council Agenda.

5. Air Quality

- (i) Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment Presentation – Paul McDonald, Principal Officer

Order: Mr. McDonald unable to attend owing to competing work commitments

- (ii) National Transportation Authority - Ann Graham, Chief Executive

Members thanked Ms. Graham for her presentation and raised the following questions.

- How do we best resource public transport to encourage maximum usage (MOB)
- Could fares be lowered or indeed free public transport provided (MOB)
- Private companies operate on a for profit basis (MOB)
- In the UK the big 5 transport companies generated £1.8bn in profits, if this was the case in Ireland surely this would be best used to invest in public transport (MOB)
- Will the electrification of the bus fleet apply to private bus companies (COM)
- What is the status with the fast rail link to Belfast (COM)
- Why did the cost of the Clontarf Cycle route grow from €7m to €20m
- Would it be an idea to give a tax incentive to encourage the use of public transport.
- Why are walking and cycling getting the crumbs of the transport cake (CC)
- Walking & Cycling must be put front and centre of the transport plan. (CC)
- Enough funding is not being provided for cycling
- Why are we not using hybrid buses in Dublin (CC)
- The cost for a family to take the bus into town is a multiple of what it costs to drive, that is why people choose to take the car (CC)
- Could the idea of offering free public transport for children on a Saturday be piloted. (CC)

- What is the view on a congestion charge (NOM)
- How is the impact of public transport on Air Quality being measured (CB)
- What is the carbon dioxide burden of the Greater Dublin Area Fleet and in the context of the National Target for 2020 (JMcC)
-

Ms Anne Graham and David King responded

- Public transport capacity is not large enough to cope with the demand if fares were lowered / free (AG)
- The revenue generated from fares is required to fund public transport. (AG)
- It would take a significant investment from the government to offer lower / free fares(AG)
- Private companies tender to provide a service and conditions will be put in licenses to ensure lower emission vehicles. (AG)
- The tax saver ticket incentivises public transport usage(AG)
- We (NTA) does not want to see walking reduced. (AG)
- The funding has not been available to implement all desired measures. (AG)
- We will be working with DCC to improve cycling and walking infrastructure(AG)
- Bus connect will deliver a further 200km of cycle lanes(AG)
- Funding has been provided to Dublin Bus for 9 hybrid buses, this will inform the tender later this year for hybrid vehicle (DK)
- From June 2019 diesel only buses will not be purchased (DK)
- Public transport has to be improved significantly before congestion charges could be considered. (AG)
- At the planning stage of any infrastructure project the current environmental impact is compared to the project implemented environmental impact. (AG)
- 4% of the total CO2 emissions come from public transport. (AG)

Order: Presentation Noted

(iii) Dublin Port Company – Laura Kearns, EHS Manager

Member thanked Ms. Kearns for her presentation and raised the following

- Is shore power available to facilitate the cruise ships docked in the port (COM)
- What is the status of the South Port access route (CB)
- Can we have more detail on the cycling and pedestrian routes mentioned in the Masterplan (CB)
- How does the port's decision to lease a piece of land to Irish Water for parking fit in with the clean air action plan (CB)
- How much of the pollution (air) identified can be attributed to truck activity and ship activity in the port – which is the bigger problem (CC)
- Can the air quality monitoring in the port be continuous instead of at different times (CC)
- This Committee would welcome more information from the port on the plans to create new habitats in the port. (RM)
- How is the operation of the port impacted if ammonia and carbon monoxide limits are exceeded (RM)

- Who has access to the Air Quality monitoring data collected in the port, is it in the public domain (RM)
- It is unfortunate that given the revenues generated by the port more up to date air monitoring systems are not in place. (MF)
- I'd appreciate a copy of the air quality monitoring data (MF)
- Shore power initiative must be mandatory (JMcC)
- It is impossible to attest that PM10 & PM2.5 measurements are in compliance given the campaign was not carried out over a 365 day period. (JMcC)
- Several air monitors should be put in place; the port activities have the biggest impact on Air Quality in Dublin. (JMcC)
- When was the dust deposition exceedance measured (JMcC)
- Can the air quality data be published. (JMcC)
- This committee would support air quality, data, methodologies etc. being published. (NOM)
- How is the pollution from ships being monitored (NOM)

Ms. Kearns responded

- Shore power is currently unavailable for ships but the Port Company is working towards this.
- Permission for the South Port Access route has not yet been granted.
- It is anticipated that there will be a 4km cycle route around the port estate.
- It is proposed to upgrade the pedestrian route currently in the port
- I will revert on the land being leased to Irish Water.
- Our data shows that the majority of the pollution is attributed to trucks, particularly in traffic heavy areas such as junctions and at congested times.
- The port currently does not have real time air quality monitoring.
- The port is in discussions with the EPA in relation to having real time monitoring equipment installed.
- The request to publish data is a policy decision which will be put to the CEO
- Dublin port feels the monitoring being carried out is quite comprehensive.
- It is not clear if the use of shore power can be made mandatory.

Order: Presentation Noted

(iv) Dublin City Council – Martin Fitzpatrick, Principal Environmental Health Officer

Members thanked Mr. Fitzpatrick for his presentation and raised the following questions / concerns

- The monitoring station on Coleraine Street is out of commission which previously had the highest NOX levels (CC)
- There appears to be no air quality monitoring in the north inner city which has a population of 77,000 (CC)
- It is not possible to tell how good the Air Quality is (in the north inner city) (CC)
- Good data is not available (CC)
- The EPA website is cumbersome to extract Air Quality data. (CC)
- Monitoring stations should be located near densely populated area (CC)
- What is the key component of air pollution in the city, petrol, diesel, home heating etc. (CC)
- What will be measured at the Pearse Street site and will the data be readily available (CB)

- The measuring for PM2.5 in Ringsend, is that new or was it always measured at that site. (CB)
- It is disappointing that, despite requests for additional monitoring stations by this committee since 2015 none have been installed. (JMcC)
- The data is not available from the EPA website (JMcC)
- Where will the additional monitoring station be installed. (JMcC)
- When will the Air Quality Data be made available to the public (JMcC)
- What is being monitored by the station in St. Anne's Park (NOM)

Martin Fitzpatrick responded

- The EPA website is cumbersome but there is a group working on how Air Quality data can be made public nationally.
- The EPA will develop a national platform for disseminating the data. There is an argument for Dublin to develop a local platform.
- There is work ongoing with the EPA to develop national emission inventories
- The Pearse Street site, when up and running will be an integral part of the National Air Quality monitoring network. This site will measure in real-time for nitrogen monoxide, PM10 and PM2.5
- There is real-time monitoring at the Ringsend site
- The archive data is available through SAFER
- The St. Anne's site which is being operated by the EPA is measuring for PM10 & PM2.5

Order: Presentation Noted. Air Quality Monitoring data for the City to be placed on the City Council Website.

6. Single Use Plastics and Cups – Fionnghuala Ryan, Executive Scientific Officer

Members raised the following issues

- Events are still using (DCC caterers) plastic, single use supplies & disposable coffee cups (CB)
- We should now be looking at wider events that have the Council's involvement in relation single use plastic and other non-recyclables (CB)

Order: Report Noted

7. Dublin Waste to Energy Update report – James Nolan, Senior Executive Officer

Members raised the following questions in relation to the report that was circulated.

- Has the commissioning of the facility been completed and if not when is it expected to be completed. (JMcC)
- Is it intended to burn sludge at the plant (JMcC)
- What is the status of the traffic survey in relation to vehicles entering the DWtE facility via Ringsend road / Strand Road / etc. (CB)
- I understand an app is being developed for members of the public to report breaches of DWTE's traffic plan, i.e. vehicles going to the facility at 4am (CB)
- Is the Covanta website displaying the CEMS data in real-time (RM)
- The plant is in the process of submitting to the EPA that there is no particular reason to review the license to burn sludges (JMcC)

- The plant does not have planning permission to burn sludge (JMcC)

James Nolan responded

- The last remaining hurdle for commissioning to be completed is for the sign off by the EPA
- Not aware of sludges being processed
- The traffic survey is currently being scoped
- The facility cannot accept waste at 4am
- The data is published at half hourly intervals and is 1 day behind

Order: Report Noted. Traffic Survey on Refuse Collection Vehicles to be advanced.

8. Motion in the name of Councillor Mary Freehill

"We call on the Manager to urgently recruit staff teams to clean our streets and roads. Furthermore, apart from the normal work crews, we propose that the Council needs a Direct Labour emergency multi-tasking well trained rapid deployment crews to deal with seasonal emergencies i.e. leaf collection, snow etc. We know that these demands for services come every year and we should be prepared for them

We have continuously pointed out that the seriously diminished level of staffing in the cleansing, road maintenance and traffic divisions is having a deleterious impact on the safety of our citizens and delivery of services in the city.

As a City Council we have a responsibility to keep the city safe from flooding which means making sure that gullies are not clogged up with leaves. Failure of the City Council to deliver these services amounts to a breakdown in services which makes life very difficult and dangerous for its citizens and especially for those who can no longer get flood insurance

These work teams can be organised on the basis of 'Multi-tasking' based on an analysis of the most commonly occurring emergency breakdowns with the teams undertaking multi-skilled training to carry out all these tasks within targeted completion times. The idea is that when dealing with emergencies they can always be planned for in advance of the breakdown with rapid work team deployment in a well-rehearsed response, executed in the most efficient effective and economic way. An agreed premium was agreed for all multi-tasking workers under local union agreements. House voids and relet repairs can be handled in the same way. Gas and Electric work can be carried out from a panel of previously appointed contractors fully integrated with the Multi-Tasking teams and supervised by the local team Clerks of Works. This is needed because of the registered Certification required with Gas and Electrical work. These teams work well in other Local Authorities".

Order: Carried comprehensive report to issue on issues raised in the Motion

9. Motion in the name of Councillor Patrick Costello an Councillor Claire Byrne

That this SPC agrees to take serious action in relation to dog fouling, and agrees to undertake the following measures

- to amend the bye laws to make it an offense to be in control of a dog without having the means to deal with dog waste while in a public park
- to write to the minister for the environment requesting a significant increase in the fines related to dog fouling
- to introduce a pilot scheme of DNA testing dog fouling, as has been successfully done in other countries, to overcome challenges in finding the owners responsible for not picking up waste.
- to provide free dog waste bags available to collect through local parks and waste depots, as well as through the local area offices as at present
- to provide increased numbers of dog waste only bins in problems areas.
- to agree to spend the complete allocation under the anti-litter grant scheme on dog fouling for one year.
- free dog waste bags when you renew your dog license

Order: Agreed, comprehensive report to issue on issues raised in the Motion

10. A.O.B.

None.

In attendance

Members

Councillor Claire Byrne
Councillor Ciarán Cuffe
Councillor Mannix Flynn
Noel Harte, Dublin Docklands Business Forum
Richie Keane, PPN
Councillor Edel Moran
Joe McCarthy, An Taisce
Robert Moss, PPN
Councillor Michael Mullooly
Councillor Michael O'Brien
Councillor Ciaran O'Moore
Councillor Naoise Ó'Muirí (Chairperson)

Absent

Councillor Declan Flanagan
Councillor Tina MacVeigh

Also in attendance

Councillor Mary Freehill
Councillor Patrick Costello

Outside Bodies

Anne Graham, National Transport Authority
David King, National Transport Authority
Laura Kearns, Dublin Port Company

Officials

Céline Reilly, Executive Manager
James Nolan, Senior Executive Officer
Martin Fitzpatrick, Principal Environmental Health Officer
Simon Brock, Administrative Officer
Ciaran McGoldrick, Senior Staff Officer
Ian Boggans, Assistant Staff Officer

Naoise Ó Muirí
Chairperson, 28th February 2019