
MINUTES OF CLIMATE ACTION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 31st March 2021

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2021

Order: Agreed

2. Matters Arising

- I. Cllr. Joe Costello sought update on availability of Climate Change training for the members.

Liam Bergin responded that he would liaise with CARO and update the members.

Cllr. Mannix Flynn highlighted that members can also identify appropriate training and seek approval for this from the Protocol Committee

- II. Cllr. Naoise Ó'Muirí asked when Minutes of the Air Quality Sub-Committee would be included on the agenda.

The Chairperson advised of circumstances related to availability of the minutes and that the minutes would be included in a future meeting agenda.

Order: Noted.

3. Correspondence

Robert Moss sought clarification in relation to policy on use of Glyphosate, any feedback from the City Council and outcome of follow up on the matter.

The Chairperson advised that he, Liam Bergin and Robert Moss could liaise on an appropriate response to Sligo PPN on the matter.

Cllr. Mannix Flynn asked that the Committee also write to the other Dublin Local Authorities advising of policy on non-use of Glyphosate.

Order: Noted.

4. Chairpersons Business

The Committee was advised that Michael Goan had withdrawn from the Committee and the Chairperson thanked him for his work and contribution. Sally Starbuck was welcomed to the Committee in his place.

The Chairperson welcome Liam Bergin, Executive Manager in place of Celine Reilly.

The Chairperson noted misunderstanding and confusion related to establishment and ongoing meetings of the Waste Remunicipalisation Sub-Committee and asked that the Committee now be adequately resourced and supported. In response to queries related to members of the Sub-Committee the Chairperson advised that details of the members would be circulated for information.

Councillor Joe Costello and Cllr. Janice Boylan observed that the Sub-Committee was established approximately 18 months ago and asked that they report to this Committee.

The Chairperson noted an Emergency motion submitted by Cllr. Mannix Flynn which could not be accepted. Cllr. Mannix Flynn highlighted application for additional waste to be processed at the Waste to Energy Plant noting concerns for local communities. Cllr. Flynn noted that the Committee should concern itself with this matter prior to application to an Bord Pleanala.

Order: Noted. Motion in the name of Cllr. Mannix Flynn to be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Climate Action, Environment and Energy SPC.

5. Resource Management Climate Actions – Sabrina Dekker, Climate Change Coordinator

Order: Noted

6. District Heating – James Nolan, Senior executive Officer

Order: Item withdrawn. Agreed that it be included at a further additional meeting of the Committee in advance of the next scheduled Committee meeting

7. Election Posters – Eithne Gibbons, Senior Executive Officer

Members thanked Eithne for her update and made the following observations

- Broadly welcomes proposals (CB)
- How best to identify exclusion areas and role of Tidy towns and other community groups in this (CB)
- Limit on posters per candidate in areas identified and practicalities of enforcement given the number of candidates that can be involved (CB)
- How best to ensure fairness (CB)
- Support of Council involvement in removal of posters to ensure higher standards (e.g. removal of cable ties) – Associated possibility of opt in service related to collection by candidates or disposal (CB)
- Concerns about disadvantaging candidates with less resources (JL)
- Why some suggestions not considered workable or for practical reasons, e.g. restricting numbers of posters per candidate, central locations identified by DCC, permit system (JL)
- Agree with proposal for further discussion prior to resubmission to SPC for further debate (JL)
- Not in favour of limits on posters as this is likely to favour incumbents (NOM)
- Elections are only a relative brief period of time and electorate only fully engage when posters are erected and visible (NOM)(JC)(MF)(JB)
- Noted how well exclusion of O’Connell Street and Grafton Street work in practice (NOM) (JB)

- Involvement of Raheny Business Association in voluntary practice in Raheny area highlighted (NOM)
- Aside from considering ACA's and area of cultural significance reluctant to extend exclusion areas but not totally opposed to limits per candidate (JC)
- Possibility of colour coded or coded ID of cable ties (JC)
- Refer back to Party's for additional observation and views (JC)
- Generally supportive of erection of posters (MP)
- Balance necessary between identification of candidate and engagement in election and saturation of areas with posters (MP)
- Opposed to ban but recognise escalation in the number of posters (MP)
- Requirement for identification of appropriate locations possibly via Area Committee's and enforcement rather than attempting to limit overall numbers (MP)
- Question over legality of restricting posters (MP)
- Noted intention to apply agreed protocol to next Local and EU elections (MP)
- Totally opposed to curtailment of posters (MF)
- Reflection on different approaches used previously, e.g. limited posters, posters and banner. Belief, supported by surveys is that posters do make a difference, especially for independent candidates with relatively scarce resources (MF)
- Questioned if national legislation is necessary to curtail practice (MF)
- Opposed to the idea that it is littering and litter enforcement arrangements are already in place to address such concerns (MF)
- Noted that additional exclusion locations may be appropriate and highlighted use of some inappropriate locations by candidates (JB)
- Welcomes idea of ID or colour coded cable ties (JB)
- Needs to be discussed with own Group on Council prior to a definitive position on the matter (JB). Approach welcomed (NOM)
- Understanding that environmentally not ideal but they are necessary for elections (CS)
- Not opposed to a number limit and questions issue with enforcement of same (CS)
- No issue with main routes but opposed to use further into residential areas (CS)
- Experience of and issues associated with use of biodegradable posters noted but worth keeping this option under review (RM)

Order: Noted. Agreed that Cllr. Michael Pidegon would work with Eithne to incorporate feedback obtained and develop the proposal to be distributed to the Council Groups for further consultation.

8. General Poster Protocol – Bernie Lillis, Litter Prevention Officer

Eithne Gibbons, Senior Executive Officer provided an update on advice received from Dublin City Council Law Agent relating to Public Liability Insurance.

Members had the following questions and observations

- Due to safety and security concerns further amendment necessary to remove the requirement for contact name and details on posters. Proposed that Dublin City Council retain these details (JL)

- If Law Agent's advice is that (i) insurance is not required, or, (ii) it is not necessary to state insurance details at time of application (NOM)
- Possible change related to security and safety concerns are fundamental and would need to be brought to the Committee for agreement (NOM)
- Noted that issue for Public Representatives is different to other individuals and is therefore supportive of possible changes associated with safety and security (CS)
- Proposed that ID number be used on posters in place of personal details (MF)
- Clarification on 500 posters limit (JC)

Order: Report noted. More informed discussion required. Decision deferred to next meeting.

9. Grand Canal Storm Water Outfall Extension Project – Padraig Doyle, Senior Engineer/Niall Armstrong, Senior Executive Engineer

The Chair thanked Niall for his presentation and the Members had the following questions and observations

- Clarification sought that proposal is to move the point of discharge (NOM)
- Noted that the river Liffey is an amenity area with associated concerns for swimming and water quality (CB)
- Why are we not considering the impact of the Liffey and the wider bay area (CB)
- Is this just persisting with an old project that may impact water animation strategy (CB)
- What is best practice in other countries (CB)
- Welcome improvement to Grand Canal Dock (CB)
- Questioned possibility of solutions and alternatives for attenuation of stormwater upstream (SS)
- Noted the diameter of pipes proposed (2x2.4m) and raised the possibility of backflow at high tide (SS)
- Concerned at the dumping of affluent and sewage into the river Liffey and environmental impact (MF)
- Has an EIS been carried out (MF)
- Is this an appropriate solution (MF)
- Noted that Question submitted to City Council related to water quality in the Liffey (JC)
- Will this potentially make water quality in the Liffey worse – concerns for swimming and salmon migration (JC)
- Is it an objective that it be safe to swim in the dock area (MP)
- Ability to cope with future storms

Niall and Padraig responded

- Clarified that project will move discharge from an enclosed body of water in the dock to a more open body of water in the river
- Impact on the river Liffey will be considered as part of the project. Water quality modelling is well advanced and will show the impact of moving the discharge to the Liffey will have on water quality. DHI carrying out water quality modelling – Danish based consultancy amongst best worldwide at this. Belief is that the effect will be negligible

- Modelling is awaited and will ultimately inform how it is intended to proceed
- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO's) are a very common method used in cities to allow for overflow
- Dealing with individual CSO's would be difficult and disruptive – difficult to scope and procure and wouldn't deal fully with the problem.
- DCC is revolutionising how it deals with drainage across the city to deal with it more sustainably to ensure new development does not impact negatively or compromise the existing system. Retrofitting sustainable drainage to existing infrastructure
- Will be dealing with the same volume of water already being discharged at Grand Canal but discharge bypassing the dock area
- Attenuation upstream not feasible due to the number of CSO's, land size and purchase requirements
- EIA study is forthcoming
- Clarified that this is for rainwater runoff and not sewer
- Noted that the current discharge is below high water level and there is sufficient hydraulic pressure for it to function
- Swimming is currently not permitted in the Grand Canal Dock and while water quality would be improved there this is not part of the project brief
- No existing problem with storms and not aware of issues currently

Order: Presentation noted. Further update to the Committee on the EIA, Water Quality Modelling and costs of the project prior to seeking Planning Permission

10. Submission to Public Consultation on the development of new Solid Fuel Regulations for Ireland – Martin Fitzpatrick, Principal Environmental Health Officer

Martin summarised the public consultation and DCC draft submission

The Members made the following observations

- Supports the submission (CB)
- Acknowledges the issue of fuel poverty but supportive of a national ban on bituminous fuel (JC)(JB)
- Need for integration with retrofitting programmes (JC)
- Ban on peat production for purposes other than as fuel (JC)
- Referred to UK Regulations and differentiation between 'effectively ban' and 'ban' (NOM)
- Sought martin's own view and experience if 3 years is an appropriate timeframe and if so include that as a strong recommendation (NOM)
- Multiple sources of timber solid fuel and associated difficulty with effective regulation (NOM)

Martin replied

- Regulations in UK envisaged a certification body which could address issue of certification of timber solid fuel. Agencies in Ireland, e.g. NSAI and EPA have responsibilities that overlap. There is already a framework for certification of solid fuels. Best solution would be to place all solid fuel certification, including timber, under one agency and one framework.

- Noted that there are challenges but if the complexity and potential for confusion can be eliminated this would provide some level of certainty to the trade.
- Solid fuel industry started to move from 2015 onwards in terms of a ban and many operators already in a position to comply. Action should be front loaded to year 1.
- Bord na Móna going out of peat production in 2024. Other uses for peat are not within the ambit of the legislation so this would have to be addressed with elsewhere.

Order: Submission agreed

11. Dublin City Council EU Programme Participation Strategy 2021 – 2027 – Ciara Ó’hAodha – Senior Economic Development Officer/ Mary MacSweeney, Deputy Head of Economic Development & Enterprise

The Members thanked Ciara and Mary for their presentation and also the work of the sub-Committee

The Members had the following questions and observations

- Important to re-establish the European office and put in work now to identify and take advantage of funding opportunities (MFreehill)
- Interreg out for consultation now (MFreehill)
- In favour of the group continuing its work (MFreehill)
- What action currently being taken by Departments in relation to URBACT
- Noted that Belfast qualifies for Interreg and that DCC should seek to partner with Belfast (MFreehill)
- Supportive of proposal to partner with Belfast and maintaining the group (MFlynn)
- Acknowledged the efforts of Cllr. Freehill and the staff (MFlynn)(JC)
- Is there any information on establishment of EU Office and its functions (JC)
- Has had contact from Joe Dunne, US Director of European Parliament Liaison Office in Washington DC. Possibility of Transatlantic link up on Climate Change, Action and funding – to forward information to Ciara and Mary (JC)
- What Programmes are coming up and what is being done in relation to them (JC)
- What is the current position regarding the office and resources (NOM)
- What are the next steps in order to maintain momentum (NOM)

Mary replied

- Noted that the office and the strategy are an additional support to existing funding applications submitted by departments
- Re-establishment of the Working group will be included on the agenda of the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC meeting on the 20th April. The SPC will also be updated on progress and resources and benefits realised
- Work is underway to get the office established, up and running
- Office will be available to support staff and Councillors
- No specific information on Department activities and URBACT

Order: Committee fully support the Initiative. Further information on upcoming Programmes to be circulated to the Committee.

12. Motion in the name Of Cllr Claire Byrne

- a. *"That this SPC agrees to establish a working group to specifically examine the issue of dog waste in the City. This working group would be established for a six month period, with the aim of setting out recommendations for operational and policy change at Dublin City Council level, and national recommendations for government. The working group could begin with a kickstart brainstorming/ thought sharing event to generate some workable ideas. The group would report back to the Climate Action, Environment and Energy SPC at each meeting."*

Cllr. Claire Byrne provided details of her Motion

- Noted that the issue had worsened during the pandemic
- Immediate action is required
 - Identify what the issues are
 - Identify the challenges
 - Identify some solutions
- Time limited to 6 months with clear terms of Reference
- Revert to SPC with a report
- Refer to the Minister for action
- Brainstorming/Thought sharing to kick-start

The Members had the following observations

- Noted this was a serious issue, welcomes and fully supports the Motion (JB)
- Should also consider issue of human waste (MF)
- The Chair advised that he had been in contact with Cllr. Syed Ghani and Cllr. Margaret Mullane of Dagenham Council and that they would talk to the group of their experience of dealing with the issue.

Members of the Working Group to include,

Cllr. Claire Byrne

Cllr. Michael Pidgeon

Cllr. Janice Boylan

Cllr. Councillor Mannix Flynn

Trevor Clowry PPN

Order: Agreed

13. Question tabled at the March meeting of the City Council for consideration

Order: Item withdrawn. To be included for next Committee meeting.

14. A.O.B.

Cllr. Mannix Flynn Motion to be included on next meeting agenda

Cllr. Joe Costello to circulate information relating to possible transatlantic link up to the committee

Cllr. Mannix Flynn asked that an item – Environmental impacts of €17m funding proposed to assist with outdoor dining – be included on the SPC agenda.

In attendance

Councillor Claire Byrne
Councillor Janice Boylan
Trevor Clowry PPN
Councillor Joe Costello
Councillor Mannix Flynn
Sally Starbuck, R.I.A.I
Bernie Guinan, A.C.E.I
Councillor John Lyons
Robert Moss, PPN
Paul Boylan, Vivid Edge
Councillor Naoise Ó'Muirí
Councillor Michael Pidgeon (Chair)
Councillor Michael Watters
Councillor Catherine Stocker

Also in Attendance

Councillor Mary Freehill

Apologies

Councillor Tom Brabazon

Officials

John Flanagan, A/Assistant Chief Executive & City Engineer
Liam Bergin, Executive Manager
Andy Walsh, A/Executive Manager
Eithne Gibbons, Senior Executive Officer
James Nolan, Senior Executive Officer
Mary MacSweeney, Senior Executive Officer
Padraig Doyle, Senior Engineer
Niall Armstrong, Senior Executive Engineer
Martin Fitzpatrick, Principal Environmental Health Officer
Ciara O hAodha, Senior Economic Development Officer
Sabrina Dekker, Climate Change Coordinator
Sid Daly, Public Domain Enforcement Officer
Richard Whelan, Administrative Officer
Seamus Coyle, Graduate Engineer
Chris Carroll, Administrative Officer

Michael Pidgeon, Chairperson

31st March 2021.

