



MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 28th SEPTEMBER 2016

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2016.

Member Mr. Joe McCarthy made the following corrections to the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2016.

- (i) There is no mention of the potential failings in Covanta's financial controls
- (ii) Interest figures relating to the project were excluded
- (iii) The actual failings of the Durham plant were not itemised
- (iv) Councillor O'Brien's request for management to be proactive and seek assurances from Covanta in relation to the concerns raised at the meeting
- (v) James Nolan stated that DCC expects to receive revenues based on the revenue of the plant and not on the profit. – Mr. McCarthy wishes to correct this, quoting from the Manager's report which stated that if DWtE returns exceed a certain threshold the Dublin Local Authorities (DLA's) will benefit from a profit share arrangement.
- (vi) Mr. McCarthy requested that the issuing of the Agenda pack be reviewed in order to ensure that it arrives to Members well in advance of the meeting.
- (vii) Mr. McCarthy proposed a motion that the Dublin Waste to Energy update report be dealt with as Item 6 after correspondence at this and future meetings

In relation to point (v) above Mr. Nolan responded that his statement that DCC's return is not based on the profit of the facility but on the revenues is correct. Mr. McCarthy is correct, if profits exceed a certain threshold there will be a further share to the DLA's

The Chair responded to point (VI) and advised that the Agenda is set by the Chair and the Officials and that DWtE is given significant attention by this Committee. He will allow it to be dealt with after correspondence on this occasion and this proposal will be considered for the future.

Order: Minutes to be amended to reflect the above.

2. Matters arising.

- In light of the Audit Committee's decision that the value of the Community Gain fund does not come under its remit an independent external auditor should be engaged. (M.F.)
- A copy of the Departmental guidelines for allowances paid to Chairs (CGF) that was previously requested. (JMcC.)

- An update on the Council's Air Quality specifically the siting of measuring equipment in the Dublin 1, 2, 3, & 4 areas. (JMCC.)
- When will the report on the DWtE project from this Committee to the City Council be on the Agenda. (JMCC.)
- In furtherance to Councillor O'Brien's request that Management should be proactive in relation to matters relating to the commissioning of the incinerator, it is understood that DCC has engaged a Client Representative (CR) to do this. (JMCC.)
- What is the formality of the reports produced by the CR (JMCC.)
- These reports are substantial (JMCC.)
- In the Committee's role of oversight of the project, there should be frank disclosure of the CR's reports in order to fulfil this role. (JMCC.)
- Any report that goes to the EPA from Covanta should be made available to the public and this committee (JMCC.)
- We need to keep abreast of the Depot Consolidation developments. (C.C) The Chair replied that this matter will be listed for the November meeting.
- Test results should be made available to this committee as previously agreed (CO'M)

Mr. James Nolan responded

- The EPA is the statutory body who licensed the facility.
- The facility will not be commissioned until February / March next year, there will be some cold commissioning (pipe work, pressure wells testing)
- All information on the commissioning will be public information.
- The information will be made available on the EPA website, the Dublin Waste to energy website and it can be distributed to this committee also.
- The EPA assigns a team during the testing / commissioning which will have a constant presence.

Mr. McCarthy added

- The materials that are relevant to the testing are significant commissioning plans
- Some agency, perhaps the Client rep or a body hired by Covanta with the acceptance of the EPA will produce the testing plans, the schedule and how the particular plant will meet the stringencies of the license. Some agency has these plans already, who is it? Can we have site of these plans.
- Covanta's commissioning engineer should present to this Committee.

Councillor Michael O'Brien

- At the last meeting I requested that DCC have discussions with Covanta about the Durham failings to ensure that they won't be replicated in the Dublin Project

Mr James Nolan responded

- The Durham Plant failed a stack test in May, the facility was then closed, a review of what caused the failing was carried out, the facility is now fully

operational with data published in real time on the Website in relation to emissions

Mr McCarthy replied

- The facility is not fully operational, it has been temporarily approved to be restarted for testing which is a completely different thing saying it has passed. The Durham plant has not yet passed its acceptance tests.
- The Canadian Ministry of the Environment has given approval for phase 2 of the testing to commence.
- It will then be re-examined to see if it is going to work and at that stage it may or may not be approved to continue operating.

Order: Noted

3. Minutes of the Special Committee on Waste Regulations meetings held on 12th July 2016

Order: Noted

4. Chairpersons Business.

None.

5. Correspondence.

None.

6. Waste Operators Presentations.

The Chair outlined that the lead operators in the city were invited to attend but only one (Thornton's) responded and they were unable to attend.
Operators to be reinvited to attend

Order: Noted

7. Dublin City Flood Risk Management – OPW Assessment.

Members thanked Gerry O'Connell for his presentation and raised the following

- The discharge of large volumes of sewage into the Liffey and can something be put in place to stop this practice (MF)
- One of the hopes of forming Irish Water was that finally storm water could be separated from sewage. This would stop the pollution of watercourses in times of extreme flooding (C.C)
- Does CFRAMS take into account the affects of Climate change (C.C)
- Would it be possible to allow the rivers to expand instead of building walls (C.C)
- Unblocking shores (leaves etc) could stop local flooding. (E.M)
- Are demountable barriers still being considered as part of the construction of the Dollymount / Clontarf flood defences. (R.M)

- The sea wall can exacerbate pluvial flooding as the wall does not allow water to drain freely.(R.M)
- If demountable barriers are not used how will the problem above be resolved (R.M)
- There are a series of toughened glass panels on the dodder which have been vandalised – In relation to flood alleviation projects having an allowance built in for Climate Change and that these factors have been included for the medium term – How many years are in the medium term ? (JMcC)
- Can a public announcements be made when sewage is discharged in to rivers to warn river users that it is not safe (M.F.)

Mr. Gerry O' Connell responded.

- Irish Water has engaged consultants to look at reducing, mainly through storage, combined sewers overflows in to the liffey.
- Irish water has responsibility for combined sewers and solutions are being progressed but it is likely to be 1 – 1.5 years before reports are available.
- OPW medium term flood prevention scenario is 500mm and 1m for critical infrastructure, in year terms up 2100.
- Sea Levels will rise by at least 700mm by 2100
- Where possible we do give room to allow the river to expand during flooding events but this is not always possible.
- The unblocking of gullies is prioritised based on forecast rain, leaves, and prone areas.
- Pollution Control will be contacted regarding discharge and notifying the public.
- Demountable barriers are being considered and a we are meeting with the Clontarf residents and businesses to discuss various options
- Medium term is 20 – 40 years.

Order: Presentation Noted

8. Climate Change Strategy Presentation

Dr. Gerry Wardell, CODEMA and Councillor Ciaran Cuff, Chair, Climate Change Subcommittee gave a presentation on the Draft Climate Change Strategy.

Order: Noted, recommend to the City Council that the commitment to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy is reaffirmed.

9. Dublin District Heating Project Presentation.

Victor Coe, Senior Executive Engineer gave a presentation on the this project which is summarised below

- The heat will be generated from the Dublin Waste to Energy Plant.
- There will be reduced CO2 emissions.
- Less dependence on solid fuels.
- Local Energy sources will be utilised.
- The system will allow for fuel flexibility.
- Employment will be created.

- Increased safety – fuel (oil / gas /coal) will not have to be kept in residences
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland tasked with promoting district heating in Ireland
- The greater the demand for DH in an area the more cost beneficial it will be.
- DCC's development plan promotes DH
- The SDZ and Poolbeg have been identified as areas for DH in the first instance.
- Some DH infrastructure has already been installed – Mayor Street / Liffey tunnel
- A heat generation / storage unit will have to be built.

Members thanked Victor for his presentations and raised the following points

- The statistic that 32% of the heat demand of the city can be met by DH is extraordinary (C.C)
- District Heating works particularly well in new builds such as the SDZ, why is steam being used instead of other mechanisms (CO'M)
- Did the Grangegorman Development express an interest in DH (M.F.)
- There should be engagement with Developers in the SDZ in advance of the developments occurring (C.C.)
- The business case for the DH is absent. (JMCC)
- Cost analysis is not mentioned (JMCC)
- Iceland and Denmark are frozen for the winter, Ireland has a temperate climate.(JMCC)
- The heat demand profile has not been established / presented (JMCC)
- Capital cost of installing DH is very expensive (JMCC)
- Do the district heating pipes run further than shown in the map (JMCC)
- A heat source was shown on Sean Moore road, what is that (JMCC)
- Reverse engineering to facilitate DH is not cost effective.(JMCC)
- Is it the intention to roll DH into existing communities or is it exclusively for the new builds in areas such as the SDZ (NO'M)
- Is it proposed to charge for DH (NO'M)

Mr. Victor Coe responded

- Developers as part of the permissions granted are required to have the developments district heating enabled
- The Grangegorman Development Agency has been in contact however this development is quite a distance from the DWtE plant. It is hoped that in time it will be possible to get pipes to the Development.
- It would be fantastic to get a load like Grangegorman onto the network
- The 2008 report was a business case to have district heating in the Docklands area. This is currently being fine tuned and a more detailed analysis of the business case is being examined.
- There will be a charge for District Heating, a return will be required on the capital investment.
- DH pipes have not been installed to the incinerator, they are in the liffey tunnel and behind the Convention Centre.
- There are in the region of 60 DH systems in the UK which would have a similar climate to Ireland, there is also a DH system in Barcelona.

- Steam seems to be the most common way of transferring heat from one source to another.

Order: Item to be brought back to the Committee for consideration when stage 1 (the business case) completed

10. Dublin Waste to Energy update report.

Members raised the following questions / points

- What is the location for the curing of the bottom ash which takes 6 – 12 weeks and when will the ash be first produced (JMCC)
- The sequence of handling the bottom ash is tricky as the planning permission only allows for it to be exported. This cannot be done until it is categorised and it can't be categorised until it is cured. A full and frank discussion must be had on what the challenges are. (JMCC)
- Actual start date of hot commissioning(JMCC)
- There should be independent testing. It is not ideal to have Hitachi testing their own plant(JMCC)
- In terms participation and understanding of the sequence of testing / commissioning the EPA, Covanta, the Client Representative, Hitachi, the General Public and this SPC should be involved. (JMCC)
- The Commissioning plans are very important, they are what allow the plant to operate(JMCC)
- The format of the Waste to Energy report presented to this Committee is narrow. It should be expanded to cover commissioning plans and testing in order to allow this Committee to fulfill the role of oversight of the project. (JMCC)
- What are expected volumes of the bottom ash and have contractors been drawn up with exporters. (CO'M)
- There is a disinclination to deal with the detail of requests put by me to the management. These are important questions (JMCC)
- The Client Representative is engaged to do studies for DCC. These reports should come to this SPC. (JMCC)
- There are formal requirements of the Waste License that Covanta have to make public all reports. These reports should also be made available to this SPC. (JMCC)
- Covanta is in breach of the Waste License as phone number and contact details are not displayed at the report reading area on site. (JMCC)
- This Committee should be given the information requested to allow the Committee to fulfill its role. (JMCC)
- The Plant appears like a piece of discarded packaging, perhaps landscaping or artistic initiative might create a more inviting presence on the peninsula. (C.C)
- It should be left the way it to remind people exactly what it is. It will be reminder of what should not have happened (M.F.)

Order: (i) Report to issue in advance of the next SPC meeting in relation to the bottom ash to cover the anticipated volumes, how it will be treated and stored before export.

- (ii) The main Contractors (Covanta & Hitachi Zonaidonva), Client representative and the EPA to be invited to the Next SPC to present on commissioning proposals.**
- (iii) Arts office to be contacted for an opinion on the appearance to the plant.**

11. Plastics Recycling.

The Assistant Chief Executive advised that this matter is being examined by the Eastern and Midland Waste Plan Regional Office and a report will issue when available.

Order: Report noted.

12. Motion referred from the South Central Area

“That this Area Committee notes with concern the regular occurrences of flooding between Comeragh Road and Coghlan Roundabout in Drimnagh. Such an instance happened 4 weeks ago during heavy rain there and is an almost yearly occurrence. Many residents on Mourne Road and Donard Road equip themselves with sandbags as a result, even though they are nowhere near any water source. To this end, we request that this motion be forwarded to the Environment SPC and Transportation SPC for consideration and for senior Council staff to consider implementing an engineering decision to solve this matter once and for all”

Order: Report noted.

13. A.O.B.

Robert Moss submitted a public statement from the Irish Seal Sanctuary outlining the problems encountered by seals breeding on Bull Island. It was agreed by the committee to invite Brendan Price, Irish Seal Sanctuary to the next meeting to present on these problems.

Order: Brendan Price, Irish Seal Sanctuary to be invited to the November meeting.

Attendance
Members

Councillor Ciarán Cuffe
Councillor Mannix Flynn
Councillor Andrew Keegan
Councillor Edel Moran
Councillor Michael Mullooly
Councillor Michael O’Brien
Councillor Ciaran O’Moore
Councillor Naoise Ó Muirí (Chairperson)
Joe McCarthy - An Taisce
Robert Moss – Community Forum

Absent

Councillor Declan Flanagan
Nicholas Cloake

Officials

Dick Brady, Assistant Chief Executive
John Flanagan, Acting City Engineer
Helen McNamara, Senior Executive Officer
Victor Coe, Senior Executive Engineer
Gerry O'Connell, Senior Executive Engineer
James Nolan, Executive Engineer
Ciarán McGoldrick, Staff Officer
Ian Boggans, Assistant Staff Officer

Also in attendance

Dr. Gerry Wardell, CODEMA

Councillor Naoise Ó Muirí
Chairperson, 30th September 2016.