
MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28th NOVEMBER 2018

1. Minutes of the meeting held 26th September 2018

Order: Agreed

2. Matters arising:

- Robert Moss queried who has responsibility for ensuring that all plastics are recycled by 2030 (in Ireland)
- Cllr Claire Byrne asked for an update on source separation of waste in public bins.
- Cllr Claire Byrne queried the status of the banning of non-compostable cups and single use plastics in DCC.

Simon Brock responded

- European Policy will have to be transposed into Irish Law initially and thereafter it will for the regional authorities to direct the Local Authorities on what is required to meet plastics targets.
- On street recycling bins will be trialled as part of the Smart Docklands initiative

The Chair queried outstanding reports from DWtE Ltd.

- (i) Waste Categorisation report.

This report remains unavailable (JN)

- (ii) Definition of the cell values for the power figures in the Excel spreadsheets for the performance demonstration tests.

These are in the Agenda Pack (JN)

- (iii) Explanation on the use of Emergency Services in relation to the June 2017 incident at the DWTE facility

A response from DWtE Ltd is in the Agenda pack.

Members raised the following issues under matters arising

- Data behind graphs (Irish Water Projections) in the presentation was to issue to the Committee but IW have stated this will be further delayed as they will be used as part of public consultation document as part of a draft national water resources plan (JMCC)
- We want the data and don't want further delays. (JMCC)
- The software report that issued at the September meeting, the minutes of the meeting recorded 5 software incidents, can the Committee have report on these incidents from Covanta. (JMCC)
- Has the business model for Dublin District Heating System been clarified. (JMCC)
- What impact does the refinancing of DWtE Ltd have on the Community Gain Fund (RM)
- It is difficult to understand how the Government allocated €20m to District Heating in the absence of a business plan (MF)

Dick Brady & James responded

- The Taoiseach and Minister announced this morning the recipients for funding from the Climate Action fund. Up to €20m could be available for the Council's District Heating Project. (DB)
- The Business model has not been finalised but it will be brought back to the SPC as soon as it is. (DB)
- The refinancing will have no impact on the value of the Community Gain Fund. (JN)
- The Government have indicated that it is willing to contribute up to €20m to the District Heating Project provided it passes the various approval requirements. (DB)

Order: Noted. Simon Brock, Administrative Officer to issue Report on street Segregation of waste to a future meeting of the SPC.

The Chair to write to Covanta seeking further clarification of the 5 software incidents.

3. Correspondence – Robert Moss, PPN Linkage Group (Appendix 1)

Order: Noted.

4. Chairperson's Business

Order: None.

5. Meeting Dates 2019

Order: Noted

6. Dublin Bay Bathing Water Quality

- (i) Environment Protection Agency Presentation – Andy Fanning, Anthony Mannix

Members raised the following questions in relation to the presentation that was delivered.

- The bathing water to the right of the wooden bridge is unsuitable for swimming, why is this the case (COM)
- It is disappointing that Sandymount and Merrion Strand have bathing bans annually – Are we en-route to a permanent ban (CB)
- What impact is the Ringsend Plant having on water quality (CB)
- What is causing the development of small sand dunes at Merrion Strand. (CB)
- The graphs as presented makes it difficult to compare one strand to another, they should be presented on 1 page (JMcC)
- What is the source of the contamination in the water (MF)

Andy Fanning

- We may be looking at a permanent ban on Merrion Strand when we have 5 years of data.
- Sand dunes can develop overtime.
- The graphs have been taken from our bathing water reports, it is what is publicly available. We will look at changing the presentation of the graphs for the next report (next year)
- It is complicated to identify the sources of contamination
- Bacteria can be held in the sand and re-enter the water
- There is a project ongoing with UCD which might identify the contaminants.
- It appears that the wooden bridge water is not sampled

Order: Presentation Noted

(ii) Irish Water Presentation – Michael Goss, Sean Laffey

Members raised the following questions in relation to the presentation that was delivered

- Is dredging in the bay affecting water quality (CB)
- What are plans for the Docklands (CB)
- The Drainage Area Plan which is at stage 4 for the City, what happens next (CB)
- Will SUDS be part of plan for drain water over flows (CB)
- Is there a plan B if the treatment plant at Clonsaugh is refused (COM)
- Were the bathing water prohibitions the responsibility of Irish Water (COM)
- The excrement in the Liffey has to be main source of water contamination in Dublin Bay (MF)
- It must be acknowledged that Irish Water have made significant improvements (MF)
- Was the bathing ban as result of a valve failure at the treatment plant (RM)
- Why was Clonsaugh chosen for the new waste water plant ahead of the other potential sites Rush & Lusk (EM)
- The additional land required for the extension of the Ringsend plant which will be leased from Dublin Port for ten years – why is this land required (CB)

Sean Laffey & Michael Goss & Gerry O'Connell & Dar White responded.

- The modelling shows that the Waste Water Treatment Plant does and will continue to fulfil its purpose (SL)
- The storm water overflows will always be in the network (SL)
- During heavy rainfall events there will always be pollution (SL)
- A lot of the contamination is caused by construction mis-connections (SL)
- The City Centre Stage 4 is due to be completed early next year. (MG)
- The 88 overflows are being examined and those causing impact will be targeted (MG)
- Other catchments that have overflows will also have to be examined (MG)
- We do see SUDS as part of the solution (MG)
- There is no alternative plan to the Clonshaugh Plant (SL)
- The dredging in the bay is being monitored and it is below the standards permitted (GOC)
- The City Council will put a ban in place until such time that Irish Water can ensure e-coli levels are in line with the licence limits, which would have been the case with the valve failure, it is not saying that the valve failure caused the problem, it is a precautionary procedure. (DW)
- The appraisal reports of candidate sites for the waste treatment plant showed that the Clonshaugh site was the most suitable (SL)
- The lands from Dublin Port are on a temporary lease to allow the contractor to work on site and will not form part of the extended treatment plant (DW)

Order: Presentation Noted

(iii) An Taisce Presentation – Michael John O’Mahony, Sinead McCoy, Ian Diamond

Members raised the following question in relation to the presentation that was delivered.

- Could nets be placed on the Drainage overflows to capture plastics (COM)
- Has an Taisce any indication what is causing the pollution in Dublin Bay (CB)
- The “think before you flush” should be targeted at social housing flat complexes (MF)
- Restaurants should be monitored in relation how they dispose of fats and oils (MF)

John O’Mahony responded

- We are working with the department with a view to possibly trialling drainage overflow nets
- We will be working with Local Authorities in relation to the “flush” campaign.

Order: Presentation Noted

(iv) Dublin City Council Parks Services – Les Moore, City Parks Superintendent gave verbal update. As set out below.

- Dollymount is the main bathing beach in the city
- It is unusual for a City to have a beach so close to the City Centre.
- The beach is maintained to blue flag standard.

- It is the Water quality that fails the blue flag criteria

Members raised the following questions

- It was previously agreed at the SPC that dogs would be banned from the left of the causeway to Sutton and the hares would be re-introduced. The SPC should follow up on these matters (COM)
- Terns have stopped breeding and the hares are no longer on Bull Island. (RM)
- Was there a review of the Island carried out and can the Committee have the details. (RM)

Les Moore responded

- A management plan for bull island has been developed and it will be launched next year.
- The island will be zoned with a dog exclusion zone being created in the area where seals breed.
- The Plan will go to the Arts & Culture SPC but I will also present it to this SPC.

Order: Noted

(v) Dublin City Council Presentation (Water Framework Directive) – Gerard O’Connell, Senior Engineer

Members raised the following question in relation to the presentation that was delivered.

- Can we have an update on the status of the river Liffey (MF)
- The use of words “moderate” and “poor” when grading the water quality is weak, more specifics are required
- Is it possible to clean up the Tolka (COM)
- There was a dolphin in the Liffey today which must say something about the water quality in the Liffey (COM)

Gerry O’Connell responded

- We are endeavouring to assign staff to examine the river liifey.
- Work is being done upstream (on the Liffey) by other local authorities
- The gradings “moderate & poor” are the European grading terminologies
- A clean-up of the Tolka will be arranged.

Order: Presentation Noted.

Order: Agreed to hold a workshop in2019 to discuss further and adopt a position to be brought to the City Council

7. Climate Change Action Plan Report – Céline Reilly, Executive Manager
 - (i) Draft Climate Change Action Plan

Members raised the following points in relation to the report that issued

- It is unfortunate that elected members were not involved in developing the plan at a strategic level (CC)
- We should monitor & report the transport modal split annually (CC)
- The plan should be reviewed in 2023 (CC)
- It is fantastic the plan has now come to fruition (CB)
- Welcome the public consultation and in particular the public engagement event to be held in the Round Room, The Mansion House. (CB)

Order: Recommend to City Council that Draft Climate Action Plan goes out to public consultation.

8. Dublin Waste to Energy – James Nolan, Senior Executive Officer

Members raised the following questions in relation to the report(s) that issued.

- In relation to emergency services not being used after the June incident, Covanta state that they have not been notified by the HSA (that the case is closed) and consequently will not reply to the question as to why emergency services were not used. (JMCC)
- The report from the HSA dated October 2017 stated the case is closed, to suggest that Covanta have not been told that the case is closed seems ridiculous (JMCC)
- This Committee requires further details from Covanta on the June 2017 incident. (JMCC)
- We need to know what lessons have been learnt from the incident (JMCC)
- There have been circa 50 incidents at the plant since the plant became operational (JMCC)
- About 29 non-compliance notices have been issued by the EPA (JMCC)
- Is this Committee going to receive further reports around the non-compliances that will give us reassurance? How will the non-compliances be fixed, have they had any negative impact on us. (JMCC)
- The plant frequently runs below the required temperature of 850C. What is the impact on air quality when the plant is operating at low temperatures. (JMCC)
- The EPA have a substantial number of Air Quality reports commissioned by Covanta from AWN
- Dr. Porter of AWN has written 6-8 Air Quality reports in relation to the non-compliances.
- When the plant runs under temperature (850c) the environment is conducive for the synthesis of dioxins (JMCC)
- The reports submitted Dr. Porter did not assess dioxins or heavy metals and the EPA requested updates to the reports. (JMCC)
- The EPA's request to assess for dioxins and heavy metals no assessment of dioxin emitted was made. The licence limit for waste incineration was used. (JMCC)
- This is an unscientific approach to assessing the incidents as normal operation is assumed – Running under temperature is not normal operation (JMCC)
- The conclusion was that the ambient for certain pollutants remained in compliance with the ambient air quality standards (JMCC)
- The conclusion was arrived at having used the incorrect inputs to the model (JMCC)
- The conclusions drawn are misleading as if selected inputs are used a valid output will not be attained. (JMCC)

- The reports are erroneous and must be corrected. (JMcC)
- Conclusions in such reports are usually accepted (by the EPA) because they come from experts – the content of the reports are not re-analysed (JMcC)
- The reports are entirely wanting (JMcC)
- The reason why the dioxins were not measured is because dioxins are only measured twice a year. (JMcC)
- When the plant is running at under temperature dioxins are not being measured
- The plant has 2 Tecora systems which collect the dioxins on a disc, this is not being done during poor operation (JMcC)
- For Dr. Porter to issue a report based on the licence limit is an obfuscation of the truth (JMcC)
- The Committee has to request the EPA to have AWN reassess the reports otherwise we do not know the impact the non-compliances have had. (JMcC)
- The Committee should Covanta to withdraw the reports and resubmitted with the correct assessments (JMcC)
- What reassurances can we have that the non-compliances do not have a deleterious impact on the citizens of Dublin (JMcC)
- The reports should be withdrawn (MF)
- It has been repeatedly requested that any documents issued to the EPA by Covanta are given to the Committee. (JMcC)
- The fact that the documents are not being made available to the Committee is of grave concern (JMcC)
- Our role at this SPC is to challenge any reports that we think are incorrect (MF)
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James Nolan & Dick Brady responded

- Dioxins are measured on a quarterly basis (JN)
- The results showed that they are 98% below the license limit (JN)
- Dioxins cannot be measured in real-time
- It is a matter for the EPA as the competent authority to accept / reject reports (JN)
- We have an opinion in relation to documents that I have not seen and we are being quoted segments from the documents (DB)
- The Committee is being asked to carry out certain actions in relation to documents that have not been seen (DB)
- AWN should be invited to attend this SPC to answer any questions members may have. (DB)

Order: Report noted. Chair to write to Covanta

9. Dublin City Council Waste (Separation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste) Bye Laws 2018 Report – Simon Brock, Administrative Officer
 - (i) Public Consultation Submissions
 - (ii) Bye Laws

Order: Draft Bye-Laws agreed. Recommend to City Council that the Bye-Laws Are adopted.

10. Motion 1 in the name of Councillor Claire Byrne:

'That this Strategic Policy Committee calls on Dublin City Council to introduce a ban on

single use plastics for the following:

- Cafes / tea rooms within DCC parks
- Market Traders that DCC licence
- All public events within the City

The ban should include non- recyclable, biodegradable or compostable cutlery, kitchenware, coffee cups and plastic bottles.'

Order: Motion agreed.

11. Motion 2 in the name of Councillor Claire

'That this Strategic Policy Committee calls on Dublin City Council to carry out a traffic assessment of large vehicles travelling to the Poolbeg Waste to Energy facility along the following streets - Bath Avenue, Londonbridge Road, Irishtown Road and the Sean Moore Road. The assessment should include vehicle size, weight, and permit to access the facility'

Order: The Manager, Dick Brady advised that a survey will be carried out.

Order: Motion agreed.

12. AOB

Rolling Agenda items requested for Progress Report update:

- Reusable coffee cups (Cllr Claire Byrne)
- Ban on single use plastics (
- Report on Noise Pollution and Enforcement by DCC (Cllr Mannix Flynn)

Order: Noted

In attendance

Members:

Councillor Claire Byrne
Councillor Ciarán Cuffe
Councillor Mannix Flynn
Joe McCarthy, An Taisce
Councillor Edel Moran
Robert Moss, PPN
Councillor Michael O'Brien
Councillor Ciaran O'Moore
Councillor Naoise Ó'Muirí

Apologies:

Councillor Tina MacVeigh

Absent:

Councillor Declan Flanagan
Councillor Michael Mullooly
William Brennan, PPN
Robert Colleran, PPN

Officials:

Dick Brady, Assistant Chief Executive
Céline Reilly, Executive Manager
Les Moore, Parks and Landscape Division Superintendent
Gerard O'Connell, Senior Engineer
James Nolan, Senior Executive Officer
Simon Brock, Administrative Officer

Elaine O'Kelly, Staff Officer
Sinead Mooney, Assistant Staff Officer
Ian Boggans, Assistant Staff Officer

Outside Bodies:

Andy Fanning, EPA
Anthony Mannix, EPA
Sean Laffey, Irish Water
Michael Goss, Irish Water
Dara White, Irish Water
Michael John O'Mahony, An Taisce
Sinead McCoy, An Taisce
Ian Diamond, An Taisce

NAOISE Ó'MUIRÍ

CHAIRPERSON, 28TH NOVEMBER 2018