
MINUTES OF CLIMATE ACTION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5th May 2021

1. Chairpersons Business

Robert Moss raised the matter of Dublin City Council Glyphosate use policy and notification to the Sligo PPN. Chair to write to Sligo and copy the members.

2. Waste Management Services Projects Update – Sid Daly, Public Domain Enforcement Officer

Members thanked Sid for his presentation and update, made the following observations and raised questions

- Noted that while some solutions have been identified and introduced he is not supportive of removal of textile recycling facilities or reduction in capacity, particularly as a response to improper use of the service. (NOM)(JC)
- Noted that more of this type of material will be presented for recycling (NOM)
- Alfie Byrne and Whitehall facilities should only be removed as a last resort option. Once removed there are difficulties associated with reintroduction (NOM)
- Supports relocation where facility presents a problem for local residents, e.g. Milltown Carpark, St. Vincent Street Flats (MF)
- How many staff working on monitoring bins at locations such as the Grand Canal (MF)
- Message necessary to highlight personal responsibility for own rubbish (MF)
- Issues associated with refuse facilities located in flat complexes and rodent infestation, e.g. York Street and Glovers Court (MF)(CB)
- Issue of dog waste throughout the area Portobello, St. Kevins, St. Stephen's Green (MF)
- Noted difficulty and confusion around DCC and other agency responsibility with regard to rat infestation in social housing units(MF)
- Multi bank combos in Bring Centres welcome (JC)
- Possibility of additional space available at Grangegorman that could be utilised (JC)
- Highlighted success of clothes collection initiative carried out by Boy Scouts and questioned if there was liaison with such groups or charities (JC)

- Welcomed piloting of waste segregation in South east and South central area's and questioned if this will be extended to the Central area and other north side complexes (JC)
- Would welcome extension of anti dog fouling initiative to all areas (JC)
- Noted new challenges presented by increased outdoor activity and street furniture (JC)
- Noted low street recycling contamination levels (RM)
- EU Circular Economy Action Plan promoting intercepting and recycling more textile material. Removing facilities is counterproductive to this and move to circular economy nationally (RM)
- Favours relocation over removal in order to break the cycle of improper behaviour (RM)
- Charity shops closed due to current restrictions result in greater reliance on textile recycling facilities (RM)
- Secure lock ups necessary for flat complexes (CB)
- Is funding available for rollout and if not how can this be sourced(CB)
- Noted 14% contamination associated with public recycling programme(CB)
- Why is the programme still in trial mode(CB)
- Highlighted additional funding available to local authority's for additional infrastructure to promote recycling (CB)
- Need to be prepared and infrastructure in place particularly for imminent single use plastic EU Directives and outdoor/takeaway lifestyle with associated food and compostable container waste(CB)
- Highlighted work done with Sid on relocation of problem banks and noted improvements at problem locations (TC)
- Question of enforcement levels and small number of dog fouling fines(TC)

Sid responded

- Reluctant to remove facilities unless there are alternative facilities in close proximity.
- Acknowledged dumping problem at St. Vincent Street Flats location and benefit for residents if removed. Capacity available at Marrowbone Lane and Dolphin's Barn.
- New units introduced at Milltown Carpark have improved the situation and this will be monitored before any final decision is made. Noted that there is no alternative facility in close proximity.
- Not currently feasible to extend the facility at Grangegorman
- Rollout in the South central and South east areas was a direct result of higher concentration of complexes in those areas. Liaising with NEIC staff to identify suitable sites for a pilot scheme.
- Additional capacity has been introduced where this is possible but there is a difficulty associated with identification of suitable sites that will allow for service provider access.
- Service providers have used down time during restrictions to make changes to and improve facilities.
- While some complexes do not have sufficient space Waste Management are committed to addressing the issue of secured lockup facilities.
- Funding available from housing Maintenance for wider rollout in the city.

- Addressed practical difficulties with enforcement of dog fouling. Update on enforcement levels to be sought.
- Small volume of textile recycling at Alfie Byrne Road and additional capacity available at Clontarf noted. Textile recycling also available at Shamrock Terrace.

Order: Noted. Further information on reporting and responsibility for dealing with reports of rats at social housing units to be provided at next meeting.

3. District Heating – James Nolan, Senior Executive Officer

The members thanked James for his report and had the following observations and questions

- Questioned the extent of the subsidy that applies(MF)
- Question mark over where and how energy is sourced and associated pollution(MF)
- Potential of District Heating welcomed but can't ignore the energy source(MF)
- Note current application for increased processing capacity(MF)
- Alternative sources of energy such as off shore wind and wave. Issue of commercialisation and profitability associated with current waste to energy source requires wider debate(MF)
- Risk of Docklands development outpacing introduction of District heating and consequent risk of need for retrofitting(NOM)
- Disappointing position in renewable heating table highlighted. What form of energy being utilised in other countries, e.g. Sweden(JC)
- When will this progress and have actual impact(JC)
- Phase 1 five year timeframe, funding of €73m with associated Dublin City council loan effect on and risk to Phase 2(JC)
- What alternative sources are possible(JC)
- Possibility of citywide introduction rather than pilot scheme(JC)
- Possibility of District heating requirement for new developments and inclusion in the City Development Plan(JC)
- Issue of timing and urgency particularly associated with Poolbeg West development(CB)
- Sufficient staff within Dublin City Council and CODEMA to deliver on the project? (CB)
- WTE designed to facilitate District heating so it is important to progress it(CB)
- Noted the cost of retrofitting dwellings from previous presentation by Ali Grehan and the fact that District Heating is therefore necessary(RM)
- Noted €20m available from Climate Action Fund and queried if legal protection is assured should there be legal action from other utility providers(RM)
- Question of contribution from site developers(SS)
- Experience of Heuston South Quarter – availability of biomass and gas but reliance is on gas (SS)
- If approach should be to allow for opt out rather than opt in(SS)

- Possible competition law issues(SS)
- In relation to Phase 2 – noted that there is a heat main laid on the south quays which could facilitate easier installation rather than reliance on fully retrofitting on busy city centre streets (SS)
- District Heating common in Eastern Europe but often not from renewable sources(SS)
- Relatively easy to substitute energy sources once infrastructure is in place(SS)
- Iceland use of geothermal source noted (SS)

James responded

- €20m grant aid is essentially seed funding that contributes to establishment of a sustainable utility rather than it being a grant aid model. Will have to compete on alike basis with other utility providers.
- WTE is there and operating but also export and use landfill. If there was no WTE reliance would be on export and landfill.
- Other sources of waste energy also available in Poolbeg that will link into the network.
- City Council liaising with developers and developments will be compatible with the network infrastructure.
- Discussion has taken place with Poolbeg West design team.
- It is standard practice to continuously review and update resourcing of the project.
- WTE facilities in other cities have been relied upon to deliver district heating and management of waste
- €20m grant aid is compliant with General Block Exemption Rules (GBER). Allows for this investment. There is ongoing monitoring for compliance with State Aid and Competition Law.
- There is capital contribution associated with connection for developers.
- Requirement to demonstrate better performance from alternative source if opting out.
- Areas are being developed as nodes which will interconnect. Longer term these will combine for a full city wide network.
- Capacity available at WTE dictates that other sources are also identified. Dublin City Council is examining alternative sources, such as, groundwater and electricity network.

Order: Noted

4. Terms of Reference for Waste Remunicipalisation Sub-Committee

The Chair provided background detail on the item.

- Noted that the Committee is already meeting and the Terms of Reference approved agreed by the Corporate Policy Group. The matter is now being presented to the members for approval in order to provide the Sub-Committee with appropriate administrative support.

The members had the following questions and observations

- Noted that not all members of the sub-committee are members of the Climate Action, Environment and Energy SPC(NOM)
- Not supportive of the full terms of reference(NOM)
- Unclear how the sub-committee fits within the full Dublin City Council committee structure(NOM)
- Note final report expected by September 2021(JC)
- If a progress report has been provided(JC)
- Recommend Terms of Reference be agreed and an urgent progress report be sought(MF)

The Chair provided the following clarification

- The group was formed as part of an overall Council group, agreed at City Council and CPG and it was necessary to incorporate it into the SPC structure.
- There has been ongoing difficulty with establishing the group and provision of administrative support. The purpose here is to progress this and for them to report into the SPC structure.

The Chair sought and received confirmation from Liam Bergin, Executive Manager that administrative support would now be provided to the Sub-Committee.

Order: Terms of Reference Agreed.

5. Motion in the name of Cllr. Mannix Flynn

That this Climate Action Environment and Energy SPC call on the CEO, Mr Owen Keegan, and DCC, to withdraw their application for the burning of another 90,000 tons at the Waste to Energy facility in Dublin Bay and instead to put all the energies of Dublin City Council into protecting the environment at Dublin Bay by ensuring better air and water quality and a better managed waste disposal program which includes a major emphasis and education programs on recycling.

Every single DCC councillor was opposed to this Covanta facility over the long period it took. Communities campaigned for years against this environmental injustice. Not to mention the scandals of financial oversight and the huge financial resources that went into this, Dublin City Council executive pursued this madness and are now adding insult to injury by telling us that there will be no increase in pollutants, no increase in traffic, and that more or less the burning of thousands of tons of waste is good for us and sustainable. Everybody should read Professor Joe McCarthy's independent report on this facility and indeed its threat to the environment and local communities. (Please see document attached).

Cllr. Flynn provided background information related to the Motion and the members made the following comments

The members commented

- WTE uses transitional material is concerned over approach to heating using other renewables. Supports the motion (JC)

- Does not support the principle of the motion but does support the broader issues involved (NOM)
- Noted that this is essentially a planning issue, possibly reflects a failure to reduce, reuse, recycle and repurpose and is happy to support the motion (CB)
- Noted recycling rates study from the UK indicating that where there is WTE recycling rates plummet. Not in support of the motion but cites a need for better insight into waste being dealt with (RM)
- Supportive of previous comments and the need for insight into waste being dealt with. Expanding WTE capacity merely encourages an increase of waste to match (SS)
- Not in agreement with all elements of the motion but happy to support the principle of the motion (MP)

James Nolan provided a response

- Provided clarification on the material being presented. Presently 600,000 tonnes disposed in landfill or exported for thermal treatment. Recycling rate of 66% would be necessary to negate the need for additional capacity.
- Material processed is validated by the EPA and is included in Annual Environmental Reports.
- No incentive to process recyclable material as this negatively affects processing capacity

The members made further comments

The type of information provided here should be presented to the Committee on a regular basis (NOM)

Welcomed the information and noted that this should have been presented before the application (MF)

Highlighted that there is not enough visibility. Proposed that if there is a cost associated with export then there is a consequent incentive to process it through the facility instead (RM)

New builds compatible with District heating. Matter for planning or City Development Plan (JC)

A roll call vote was taken. Of the members present, 6 Members were in favour of the Motion, 2 were against and there were 2 abstentions.

Order: Motion Agreed. Text of Motion to be sent to Chief Executive.

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

Order: Agreed to defer to next meeting

7. AOB

Item to review meeting times and procedure for extra meetings to be listed on next agenda.

Cllr. Flynn requested that item on large gatherings and associated issues be included for discussion on the next agenda.

In attendance

Councillor Claire Byrne
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

Officials

John Flanagan, A/Assistant Chief Executive & City Engineer
Liam Bergin, Executive Manager
James Nolan, Senior Executive Officer
Sid Daly, Public Domain Enforcement Officer
Chris Carroll, Administrative Officer

Michael Pidgeon, Chairperson

5th May 2021.