
MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE ACTION, ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29th NOVEMBER 2023

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2023

Order: Agreed

2. Matters Arising

None.

3. Chairperson's Business

In follow up to the motion from last year's SPC, that we would sign up to the Circular Cities Declaration, there was a great workshop run and things are moving forward to hopefully agree to sign those declarations in the new year.

The deadline for submissions for the new Transport Management Plan for the city centre is Friday.

4. Correspondence

None

5. Meeting Dates 2024

Order: Noted

6. Climate Action Plan and Net Zero Cities update presentation - Sabrina Dekker, Climate Action Co-ordinator

Members thanked Sabrina for her report / presentation and raised the following questions

- How do we find out more about the biodiversity artists? Did it go out to public commission? Has a person been appointed and what was the process? (DC)
- Why do you think the numbers of submissions were low? Do you feel people didn't know enough about it and could we do more in terms of meetings in areas? Was it sent out to Dublin Your Voice? (DC)
- It's hard with plans and reports to know how they nest together and does one trump the other? It seems aspirational but will it actually be implemented in the same way? (SS)

- Why was there such low engagement with the Draft Climate Action Plan? Noting the event in the Mansion House was brilliant, really good programme, very well organised, the creativity was amazing, but disappointing not to see many people there and wondering why you think that might be and whether it would be better to host these events on a Saturday is possible? (CB)
- When will local councillors be given a plan of action for decarbonisation zones? (CB)
- Consider to have an open competition through the Art's Office, advertised in the e-bulletin for the biodiversity artists in residence. Caution against preselection that doesn't go out to public (DC)
- Missed opportunity if not an open competition (CS)
- What is the hierarchy of the different statutory plans how does it relate to the City Development Plan? (SS)
- How many people showed up for the event and how tangible is what is on the agenda? (NOM)
- Once the plan is complete and published, have you identified the stakeholders in the commercial sector, community sector & state agencies that will need to meet to hash out the details to implement the Climate Action Plan, in particular the decarbonisation zone strategy part of it and what is likely to happen next? It will be make or break who the stakeholders are and the SPC should be revisit. The plans shouldn't be siloed at it would lessen the impact on society. (RM)
- Are we looking at the April or the October deadline in 2024 for Net Zero? Are we waiting on sign off the Climate Action Plan before we finalise the deadline? (CB)

Sabrina and Derek responded:

- Biodiversity artists in residence have not yet been appointed. Ruth Johnston is the project manager and brief will be written in the next month or so to call out to artists/ key artistic institutes to recommend artists. 3 or more artist to be confirmed in the New Year and will be embedded in the organisation for a 6 month period.
- In terms of the low numbers at the event, it could have been because it was Tuesday, beginning of school year, people aren't aware it's a statutory plan or people are tired of plans and consultation. Many of the responses were asking to please get on with the plan. This is not exclusive to Dublin, 14 cities are struggling with the exact same thing. It is complex. It is something we need to keep doing.
- Hopefully by February we should have clear actions about what we want them to do and when the Ringsend workshop will be. We would like Cllrs. to attend.
- The plans are intertwined. It goes Corporate Plan, Development Plan and the Climate Action Plan. They come under different requirements and strands of legislation yet are intermingled.
- Attendance of 150 people for the initial first hour of the event and then less than 100 for the remainder. Eat the Streets had just under 4000 attendees.
- With DZ's we are still working with the community and identifying their needs and wants are. It is a work in progress. Work is ongoing to identify stakeholders as this is not DCC alone. It is DCC with everyone in the city.
- The Climate Action Plan is DCC's plan for what we can implement ourselves as a local authority. Other state agencies will have their plans that they are implementing themselves. As part of the mission and Net Zero we will try to get as many stakeholders to sign up with the aim of getting to net zero.

- We are aiming for April 2024. We are working hand in hand the application for the March application. There is a lot of work involved before the deadline, if not it will be the following one.

Order: Noted

7. Flooding - James Nolan, Executive Manager

(i) Flood Resilience & Nature Based Solutions - Roy O'Connor, Senior Engineer

Members thanked Roy for his report / presentation and raised the following questions

- Why do these projects take so long and what can we do to speed them up? (DC)
- Is it official Dublin City Council policy to take approach used for the Santry river? Were we unlucky that that two major schemes on the south side of the city were developed prior to this becoming policy? (CM)
- Is the Santry Project primarily a floor elevation scheme or a river restoration scheme? Or is it the case that river restoration was identified as the most effect solution to the kind of flooding the Santry causes? Is the flooding on the Poddle more serious and therefore required a hard engineering solution? (CM)
- In the case of the trees that have to be removed from parks in the Poddle scheme and replaced as standalone individual street trees, could we use tree pits? (CM)
- Are the team aware of the new playground to go into McAuley Park and that this doesn't conflict with the plans? (CS)
- Are roads and parks working together to save trees and provide tree pits? (CS)
- Are there any ideas or initiatives to propagate these suggestions into the private sector (eg. Into private carparks) to prevent flooding? (RM)
- Are there SUDs factored into raised beds on Liffey Street? What will the impact be of the Irish Water Grand Canal Dock sewage system upgrade? Can we get more details on the permeable cycle route on Eglinton Road and the Whitefriars Quarter project? (CB)
- Is the funding in place for the Santry project? (CB)

Roy and James responded:

- There are two separate projects here. The MacAuley project is part of Rainscapes and was part of nice site being progressed in parallel. It is progressing relatively timely considering the number of public consultations involved. The Santry River restoration project concept was identified in 2019 and there was a long process through that, notwithstanding the Covid aspects of the delays. It had to be scoped, URSF funding applied for and all of the supporting partners were brought on board. The project is for a whole catchment and is probably one of the largest catchment projects in the state. WE are in an 18 month process for consultants to propose and then will have to select a preferred option. We will be delivering in segments as resources, particularly funding, becomes available.
- All of the flood defence projects in the city are large scale infrastructure projects, whether they are engineering or nature based solutions. We are talking about timelines of 5-7 years and each phase takes 12-18 months. Any project of that scale across the country is on a similar timeline.

- There were 12 non-statutory consultations before the statutory consultation for the Dodder and the scheme is led by South Dublin. A lot of the hard defences are very small and we will be looking at greening options, meeting with parks to decide locations for trees and will consider tree pits. Where we could we used environmental measures, but in a heavily urbanised area it is very limited what we can do.
- Around 10% of our funding goes into environmental measures. We are carry out otter holes and locations of different protected species, liaising with parks.
- It's not a priority for one strategy over another, we are looking at the entire catchment area. We are looking at how we manage surface water in a sustainable way. It is always a combination of different solutions.
- We are aware of the McAuley Park playground and we meet on a quarterly basis with the Parks department to ensure we are aligned and collaborating on project with them.
- Tree pits are relatively new and we are working to incorporate them into all future designs where appropriate. We need to ensure we are choosing the most resilient trees for the pits.
- Over 90% of the city centre is impermeable, which is a huge challenge. We have developed a set of guidelines for the private sector and they are incorporated into planning applications. We also need to look at existing set-ups. We are looking to provide the most cost effective solutions within the public realm area to address surface water run-off. There are a number of rainscapes trials in place at the moment.
- It depends if the planter is hydraulically connected, these pieces of infrastructure need to be considered where appropriate.
- The Eglinton Road project is on our Rainscapes website. Predominately it is upgrading the earthworks around the existing tree pits and replacing the cycle lane. Most of the works are underground to manage the surface water.
- We have just received approval and funding for the Goldenlane project. This will be going out to consultants shortly. It is a key opportunity to fund an inner city trial to see how we have fund its scalability for future projects.
- The funding is in place for the Santry project, predominantly the URDF and then part DCC funding and the NTA are on board as well. Our match funding is 25% for this phase.

Order: Presentation Noted

- (ii) Flood Projects & Strategy - Gerry O'Connell, Senior Engineer

Members thanked Gerry for his presentation and raised the following questions

- Why can't the office of public works build a higher wall in Sandymount? Can we look for a meeting with the OPW, local TDs, local Councillors, residents and DCC to see how we can speed up the process as most of the delays are state imposed schemes? (DL)
- Could the relevant section look at shores and drains in Sandymount? (DL)
- On the Clontarf seafront the flooding issue is also from rain and hope that the entire catchment is considered. Have you looked at the impact of Dublin Port and the dredging occurring there? (DC)
- Are we confident that the significant development on Poolbeg peninsula has flood defences built in, considering the area is in red on the flood map? (CB)
- We can't be waiting 7-8 years for plans. If there is anything we can do at a DCC level to move things along? (CB)

- Where is the emergency planning for flood events? (CB)

James and Gerry responded

- We are setting up the framework, the responses are due in. We can and will deliver. In Q1 a consultant will review the approvals already in place and if compatible with the overall design we will deliver on them immediately.
- The tender is out for Sandymount. We are using the same framework for Clontarf which should be done in Q2 2024.
- All schemes, both river and tidal, look at the drainage network. If the model of the scheme makes that worse, then it need to be solved by the scheme. The whole package is looked at together.
- The dredging at Dublin Port does not increase flooding on the Liffey.
- We have a flood emergency plan that sits under our main emergency plan. We have a monitoring program in place. We have flood warning. For coastal we get 2-3 days high tide warning. For other flooding it is harder predict so we might have 24-48 hours' notice. Half of the major emergencies in Ireland are flood related. With flood gates and new schemes we are reducing the risk as much as we can.
- The red area are protected up to the 200 year flood event. All flood developments come to the team for assessment. We put limits on the ground floor of these developments even when they are protected.

Action: Formally requesting the meeting with the OPW regarding the Sandymount Scheme in the New Year.

Order: Presentation Noted

8. A.O.B.

Request by Cllr. Donna Cooney to get a timeline for the simulated flood event and for the simulation of a flood emergency to involve volunteers.

Order: Agreed. James Nolan to revert with a timeline.

Motion in the name of Cllr. Carolyn Moore

“That this SPC agrees to write to waste collection providers in the DCC area requesting a response to recent reports that domestic waste presented for collection in recycling bags has been brought for treatment in the Waste to Energy plant in Poolbeg. Can the manager make a statement on this issue, and can we include a full report on the matter on the agenda for the next meeting of this SPC?”

Order: Agreed. Derek Kelly to revert to the committee on this matter at the meeting to be held on 31st January 2024

In attendance

Councillors

Members

Councillor Janice Boylan
Councillor Claire Byrne
Councillor Deborah Byrne
Trevor Clowry, Public Participation Network
David Kelly, Dublin Chamber
Councillor John Lyons
Sally Starbuck, Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland
Councillor Carolyn Moore
Robert Moss, Public Participation Network
Councillor Naoise Ó'Muirí
Councillor Catherine Stocker
Councillor Michael Watters
Councillor Claire O'Connor
Councillor Mannix Flynn

Also in attendance

Councillor Dermot Lacey
Councillor Donna Cooney

Officials

Derek Kelly, Executive Manager
James Nolan, Executive Manager
Sabrina Dekker, Climate Action Co-Ordinator
Gerry O'Connell, Senior Engineer
Roy O'Connor, Senior Engineer
Chris Carroll, Administrative Officer
Ciarán McGoldrick, Senior Staff Officer

Cllr Claire Byrne

**Chair, Climate Action,
Environment and Energy
Strategic Policy Committee
29th November 2024**