

Minutes of the Strategic Policy Committee Meeting for Climate Action and Environmental Services held online on Wednesday 2nd February, 2022 at 3.00 pm.

Present: Cllrs. N. Keelan, C. Bennett, P. Treanor, S. Coyle, R. Aughey
Liam Murtagh, Transition Monaghan, P. McCabe, NFGWS, Brian Duffy, Castleblayney Regeneration
N. Woods, P. McGuinness, K. Duffy, B. McMahon, P. Sherlock, R. Sheehan,
D. Beagan, P. Deery, S. McBrien, D. McEvoy, M. Smith, S. Mallon

Apologies: P.Tierney, M.Mayne

1. Matters Arising

N. Keelan thanked Cllr. Treanor for acting as Chairman at the last meeting of the SPC as he was unable to attend.

Cllr Keelan thanked P. McGuinness for his support following the retirement of Mr. A. King and commended N. Woods on her appointment as Acting Director.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes were proposed by P. Treanor and seconded by S. Coyle.

3. CANN Project Update

Cllr. Keelan invited Paul Sherlock and Rory Sheehan to give an update to members on the CANN Project.

The presentation gave a background and a brief description of the CANN Project including the aims & objectives of the project. Works done on Sliabh Beagh as part of the project are described including drain blocking, invasive species removal, producing a wildfire guidance document and ammonia monitoring with results and benefits of the works shown. Plans for 2022 as part of the CANN Project were also set out.

Cllr Keelan thanked both for their presentation and invited questions from the members. These included questions regarding the area that CANN covers in terms of size and regarding the removal of trees. Members also expressed their concerns regarding what will happen when the project ends.

P. Sherlock and R. Sheehan responded to the questions and also advised that engagement with the local community and farmers had been positive.

Cllr. Keelan and N. Woods thanked them for their comprehensive presentation and acknowledged their excellent work on the project.

4. RMCEI

K. Duffy gave an update on the RMCEI to members and advised that it is a yearly requirement. In previous years we advised the Dept. of our priorities for the year ahead, however this year we must outline our priorities for 2 years. We are currently in the process of compiling our priorities for 2022 Mr. Duffy introduced members to the staff of the Waste and Water teams and gave a brief outline of priorities relating to the 2022 – 2024 period, namely National Enforcement, National Waste, National Water and National Air and Noise. He advised that the RMCEI return takes some time to

complete; as a result staff are unable to be on site as much as they would like due to the considerable amount of paperwork.

Mr. Duffy invited questions from members and responded to queries relating to the provision of bins, enforcement and illegal dumping sites.

N. Keelan and N. Woods thanked Mr. Duffy for his presentation and acknowledged the role of the Environmental Services staff.

5. Rural Water update on GWS Subsidy, Capital, Well and Domestic Wastewater Treatment System Grant and Inspections

S. Mallon gave an update to members on the Multi Annual Rural Water Programme for 2019-2021 (MAWRP) and briefly advised of the grant aid administered to group schemes towards upgrade works on their schemes in the county. She gave a brief outline of the subsidies and grants available for domestic wastewater treatment systems/septic tanks and invited questions from members.

Ms. Mallon responded to queries relating to registration process and inspections.

N. Keelan thanked her for her comprehensive presentation and expressed his concern that grant aid needs to be dealt with at national level as the amount of aid is poor.

AOB

N. Woods advised that the taskforce relating to the poultry industry is very much a priority at the minute and the senior team in Environment have met with key players in the industry. It is hoped by the end of February/early March the taskforce will be formed.

L. Murtagh to liaise with N. Woods on possible items for the next meeting relating to mining, sustainable tourism. The PPN has done some work on this and Donal Sheehan may be able to give a presentation/update to members.

B. Duffy referred to the Climate Action Plan that has been passed in the Dail and queried the action that is being taken by Monaghan County Council and requested this item be placed on the next agenda.

K.Duffy responded that the Local Authorities are still waiting on guidance at national level. Draft guidance was issued after Christmas but final guidance has not been received. Within 18 months of passing the act, a directive will be issued to local authorities.

N. Woods responded that this would be placed on the next agenda

Date of next meeting: The next meeting of the SPC will hopefully be held in person on Wednesday 11th May, 2022 at 11.00am. Location to confirmed at a later date.

N.Keelan thanked members for their attendance.