

## **Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee (Economic Development & Enterprise Support) meeting**

**held 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 in Council Chamber, MTek 1,**

### **In attendance:**

Cllr. Sean Gilliland (Chair)	Monaghan County Council
Cllr. Colm Carthy	Monaghan County Council
Cllr. David Maxwell	Monaghan County Council
Cllr. Noel Keelan	Monaghan County Council
Cllr. P.J. O’Hanlon	Monaghan County Council
Mr. Patrick McCormick	Irish Farmers’ Assoc. – Agricultural Pillar Rep
Mr. Alan Johnston	Monaghan Town Team – Business Pillar Rep
Mr. John Tobin	Carrickmacross Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Paddy Sherry	Knockatallon Ramblers – PPN Rep
Mr. Cathal Flynn	Director of Services, Planning & Economic Development
Mr. Adrian Hughes	Senior Planner
Mr. Toirleach Gourley	Senior Executive Planner
Mr. Gareth McMahon	A/Director of Services, Transport, Community & Rural Development
Ms. Angela Gallagher	Administrative Officer, Planning Section
Mr. Morgan Crumlish	KPMG Consultants
Mr. Eoghan Carr	KPMG Consultants
Mr. David McGlinchey	KPMG Consultants
Ms. Orla Brady,	Senior Executive Officer, Transport, Community & Rural Development
Ms. Nicola Payne	Administrative Officer, Community & Enterprise

### **1. Previous Minutes**

The minutes of meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were proposed by Cllr. David Maxwell and seconded by Patrick McCormick.

### **2. Matters arising**

Cllr. David Maxwell referred to the Residential Zoned Land Tax and asked for an update. Adrian Hughes advised that this item is on the agenda.

### **3. Development of Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)**

Mr. Morgan Crumlish of the appointed consultants KPMG made a presentation to the SPC and stated that a number of meetings will need to take place over the forthcoming months to ensure that the LECP is implemented in accordance with the specified timescales. His presentation provided a brief

overview of the process and considerations involved and he outlined dates where the SPC would be required to feed into the process.

Cllr PJ O'Hanlon stated that he could not see the presentation properly and stated that the presentation should have been circulated in advance of the meeting to allow all the members to look over the data.

Morgan Crumlsh apologised to the SPC Members and stated that he will ensure that all future presentations are circulated in advance of the meetings and agreed that his presentation will be circulated to the members after the meeting.

Ms Nicola Payne stated that due to the tight timeframes some of the SPC meetings will have only one item on the agenda.

Gareth McMahon stated that through each stage/milestone this will need to be brought before and approved by the Economic Development & Enterprise Support SPC. The one item ad hoc meetings need take place to enable sign off on the plan.

Cllr PJ O'Hanlon asked why KPMG were not at the meeting in person.

Gareth McMahon stated that they were only appointed last week and that if required they will attend any future meetings in person.

Alan Johnston asked if this is a statutory obligation under the guidelines.

Gareth McMahon stated that they are required to have the approval of the SPC at each stage as outlined under the guidelines.

#### **4. Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)**

Toirleach Gourley provided an update to the group on what has taken place on the RZLT over the past couple of months. A copy of these notes are attached to the minutes. (See Appendix 1)

Cllr. David Maxwell asked if someone missed the opportunity to put in a submission, does their land go onto the map? Who makes this decision as no submission was received? Do they get another chance to put in a submission?

Toirleach Gourley stated that the Planning Authority undertook a detailed process regarding water connection, sewers, footpaths etc., had discussions with the Municipal Districts and Water Services prior to being added to the map. If the parcel of land is on the map, then in all likelihood it meets the criteria. He added that if they missed the deadline for submission it is unlikely that they will be able to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanala.

Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon stated that the RZLT timelines were too tight and asked in relation to building houses going forward can further land be brought in, if other lands are being taken out as a result of requests for dezoning? Cllr PJ O'Hanlon also stated that the Council should not be dezoning land that is fully serviced and close to town.

Adrian Hughes stated that there is currently enough land zoned in Carrickmacross and the dezoning lands that are zoned Strategic Residential Reserve is not going to affect the amount of land that can

be currently developed for housing. Adrian Hughes stated that the Housing Needs Analysis and Housing Provision Review which are currently coming to a conclusion will shed a light on the lack of private housing in the County.

Cllr Noel Keelan asked in terms of numbers in relation to the 400 sites, how many sites do not have a registered land owner?

Toirleach Gourley stated that he didn't know the exact number as that was not the focus of the RZLT mapping.

Cllr Noel Keelan stated that he feels that the legislation was rushed and is worried that some people were unaware of the fact that lands zoned Strategic Residential Reserve were liable to the tax. He asked that if someone has asked for their land to be de-zoned if it would be de-zoned?

Adrian Hughes stated if someone has put in a request to de-zoned or rezone lands currently zoned Strategic Residential Reserve, the Local Authority will be amenable to considering the request.

Cllr Noel Keelan stated that he was concerned that there were only 80 submissions made in respect of 400 land parcels. He asked if the Local Authority could bring forward Strategic Residential Reserve for development and what is the mechanism?

Adrian Hughes stated that 80 submissions is the 8<sup>th</sup> highest in the State which is very good compared to other similar sized local authorities. Toirleach Gourley added that the number of submissions received in County Monaghan was just behind the local authorities in Dublin, the two local authorities in Cork, Donegal and Tipperary.

Toirleach Gourley stated that the development landscape is changing, landowners now need to sell, develop or pay the tax on their land. He also stated that the Planning Authority has been proactive in trying to find out what the issues are, through the Housing Provision Review.

Patrick McCormick thanked the Planning Section their work they have put into the process, checking the land and this saved farmers the trouble of having to write in. Patrick McCormick asked for clarification that if someone missed the deadline and didn't put in a submission, could they appeal to An Bord Pleanála.

Toirleach Gourley stated that he didn't think the legislation provided for this. Adrian Hughes stated that the Planning Section will seek clarification from the legislation on this but it was unlikely they could.

Patrick McCormick asked that if someone asked for Strategic Residential Reserve to be taken off the map will it be re-zoned?

Adrian Hughes stated that the Planning Authority would be generally amenable to this, however if the request was to be zoned to another land use, this would need to be considered in detail.

Patrick McCormick stated that the IFA are still seeking to have agricultural land excluded and asked if someone missed the opportunity this year, could they make a submission the following year?

Toirleach Gourley confirmed that they could put in a submission the following year and that they should only be liable for tax for one year should their submission be successful.

Cllr Colm Carthy stated that all this work should lend positively to the work involved in the New County Development Plan.

## **5. County Development Plan 2025-2031**

Toirleach Gourley made a short presentation to the Committee outlining the dates and timelines in connection with the preparation of the County Development Plan 2025-2031 (refer to Appendix 2).

Adrian Hughes stated that this is perhaps the most important strategy that the Committee will be involved in and that the Planning Authority will be consulting with the SPC over the weeks and months ahead.

Cllr David Maxwell asked on behalf of Alan Johnston for an update on the Town Regeneration Officers.

Cathal Flynn stated that the interviews would take place in March and Adrian Hughes stated that they would possibly be based in the Planning Offices.

Cllr PJ O'Hanlon referred to Rural Housing and Ribbon Development and stated that we are a rural county and this policy needs to be looked at and asked what are the timelines for submission and dates for SPC Meetings?

Toirleach Gourley stated that due to Covid 19 legislation there was the possibility of extending the date for formally commencing the preparation of the development plan and that a decision on this will be made within the coming days.

Toirleach Gourley referred to the Questions sheet setting out issues relating to issues to be addressed in the development plan which was circulated in advance of the meeting and asked that the members of the committee consider these questions and raise any other issues that are pertinent to the development plan.

Toirleach Gourley confirmed to Patrick McCormick that the purpose of the Questions sheet was not to get answers to the questions, but to generate discussion on if there were any additional questions or issues to be raised.

Cllr Noel Keelan referred to National Policies and asked if they are going to be changed. He also asked if zoning issues in the towns were going to change?

Toirleach Gourley stated that the landscape is changing in relation to zoning as a result of national policy requiring more compact urban form, the need to address dereliction and vacancy, the introduction of the Residential Zoned Land Tax, and the need to encourage active travel and address climate change. He stated that a Climate Action Plan for the County was being prepared. He added there are set guidelines regarding zoning and that the Planning Authority is currently waiting for the 2022 Census data for the County. He also referred to the importance of town centre regeneration and stated that we need to focus on our town centres to ensure they are kept alive.

Cllr Sean Gilliland referred to dereliction and a new statutory process and suggested a meeting dedicated to dereliction.

John Tobin stated that some commercial units will return to residential.

Adrian Hughes stated that the amount of land to be zoned for residential use is still restricted by the requirements of the Core Strategy, and that the new development plan will be prepared under the oversight of the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), thus it will be a complicated issue to deal with.

Cllr PJ O'Hanlon stated that the Committee needs to have an input in the LECP process as outlined earlier in the meeting and that the SPC needs to feel valued.

Cllr Noel Keelan asked why the Council went externally in relation to the preparation of the LECP.

Cathal Flynn stated that KPMG are engaging with more than one SPC.

Cllr David Maxwell stated that there was money in the budget allowance to pay for the appointment of consultants.

## **6. AOB**

No items raised under AOB.

## **7. Date of Next Meeting**

Cllr. Sean Gilliland stated that there is likely to be more than four meetings this year to accommodate the LECP and the New County Development Plan. Some meetings may only be a one item agenda meeting. Angela Gallagher to liaise with the Community & Enterprise Section and with the Planning Section to agree future dates.